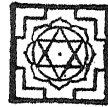


LAGHU-YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

K. NARAYANASWAMI AIYER



THE ADYAR LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE

THE ADYAR LIBRARY
GENERAL SERIES

[3]

LAGHU-YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA

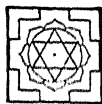
English Translation

LAGHU-YOGA-VĀSISTHA

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

K. NARAYANASWAMI AIYER



THE ADYAR LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE

© 1971 The Adyar Library and Research Centre
Adyar, Madras 600020, India

First Printed 1896
Reprinted 1914
Second Edition 1971
Third „ 1975

SBN 0-7229-7497-3 (U.K.)
ISBN 0-8356-7497-5 (U.S.A.)

At the Vasanta Press, The Theosophical Society,
Adyar, Madras 600020

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	ix-xxxiii
I. VAIRĀGYA PRAKARAṆA	1-39
1. The Story of Śuka	31
II. MUMUKṢU PRAKARAṆA	40-51
III. UTPATTI PRAKARAṆA	52-144
1. The Story of Ākāśajā (the son of Ākāśa)	52
2. The Story of Līlā	65
3. The Story of Karkaṭi	89
4. The Story of Aindava (the son of Indu or the Moon)	103
5. The Story of Deceitful Indra	106
6. The Story of Manas (Mind)	109
7. The Story of a Bāla (Lad)	114
8. The Story of a Siddha	117
9. The Conclusion of Utpatti Prakaraṇa	124
IV. STHITI PRAKARAṆA	145-201
1. The Story of Śukra	145
2. The Story of Dāma, Vyāla and Kaṭa	154
3. The Story of Bhīma, Bhāsa and Dr̥ḍha	164
4. The Story of Dāśūra	170
5. The Story of Kaca	196
6. The Conclusion of Sthiti Prakaraṇa	200
V. UPASĀNTI PRAKARAṆA	202-321
1. The Story of King Janaka	202

	PAGE
2. The Story of Puṇya and Pāvana ...	211
3. The Story of the Great Bali ...	222
4. The Story of Prahlāda ...	233
5. The Story of Gādhi ...	248
6. The Story of Uddālaka ...	258
7. The Story of Suraghu ...	275
8. The Story of Bhāsa and Vilāsa ...	285
9. The Story of Vitahavya ...	289
10. The Conclusion of Upaśānti Prakaraṇa ...	306
 VI. NIRVĀṆA PRAKARAṆA ...	 322-479
1. The Story of Bhuṣuṇḍa ...	322
2. The Story of Deva-pūjā (Worship of God) ...	343
3. The Story of the Bilva Fruit ...	357
4. The Story of Śilā, a Granite ...	360
5. The Story of Arjuna ...	362
6. The Story of the Hundred Rudra-s ...	367
7. The Story of the Vetāla (Goblin) ...	373
8. The Story of Bhagīratha ...	378
9. The Story of Śikhidhvaja ...	384
10. The Story of Kaca ...	438
11. The Story of Mithyā-Puruṣa, the Illusory Personage ...	442
12. The Story of Bhṛṅgīśa ...	445
13. The Story of Ikṣvāku ...	449
14. The Story of a Muni and a Hunter ...	461
15. The Conclusion of Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa ...	466
 Index ...	 481

K. NARAYANASWAMY AIYAR

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

K. Narayanaswamy Aiyer, son of Krishnaswami Aiyer, was born at Kazhukanimattam Village, Tanjavur District, South India, in the year 1854. He was the second of four brothers, three of whom occupied fairly comfortable positions in life. One of them was the late K. Veeraswami Aiyer, a prominent Vakil of Tiruvarur in the early twenties of this century, and another, an engineer of the Public Works Department of the Government.

Educated at his village school at Kazhukanimattam and, later, at the Kumbakonam Town High School and at the Kumbakonam Government Arts College, he was a first grade pleader at Kumbakonam and made a reasonably prosperous living there. He had a son and two daughters.

He joined The Theosophical Society during the presidentship of Col. H. S. Olcott and travelled very widely all over India including far places like Kabul and Srinagar at a time when communications were poorly developed (1905-18), spreading the message of The Theosophical Society.

His task was also to help in weaning away Indians from the Christian missionary influence and from an imitative way of life patterned on the West. His rare persuasiveness and lucidity of expression brought

good results. His personal life as a real Saṃnyāsin carried profound conviction everywhere. His scholarship in Sanskrit and English and his deep knowledge of his own and western religions earned for him a great measure of contemporary veneration. He died in December 1918 at Pudukkottai on one of his lecture tours. An assiduous writer, his articles regularly appeared in *The Theosophist*, then published from London. He wrote six major books: *Hindu God Universal*, *Thirty Minor Upaniṣad-s*, *Thirty-two Vidyā-s*, *Purāṇa-s in the Light of Modern Science*, *Yoga: Lower and Higher* and a translation of *Laghu Yoga Vāsiṣṭha*. A minor work which attracted attention particularly among Western scientists was *Prof. Bergson and Hindu Vedānta* which appeared in a pamphlet form.

Though K. Narayanaswamy Aiyer passed away some fifty-five years ago, the demand for some of his works has persisted. The Adyar Library and Research Centre has reprinted two of his works: *The Laghuyoga-vāsiṣṭha* and *Thirty-two Vidyā-s*, half a century after his demise.

PREFACE

THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA is a popular text on Advaita Vedānta, Purāṇic in form and philosophical in content. It is also known by other names like *Ārṣarāmāyana*, *Jñānavāsiṣṭha*, *Mahārāmāyana*, *Vāsiṣṭharāmāyana* and *Vāsiṣṭha* and is ascribed to sage Vālmīki himself. It is in the form of replies given by Vasiṣṭha to Śrī Rāma's queries regarding philosophical problems of life and death, and human suffering, and treats the essentials of Advaita Vedānta. It seems to advocate the *drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* which holds that the world exists only so long as it is perceived: *manodṛśyam idaṃ sarvaṃ* 'the whole world of things is the object of the mind'.

The *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* is an abridged version of the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, compiled by one Abhinanda of Kashmir. For the first three Prakaraṇa-s there is a commentary called *Vāsiṣṭha Candrikā* by Ātmasukha, and for the last three Prakaraṇa-s Mummidī Devarāya wrote the *Samśāratāraṇī* commentary (both published with the text, Nirnayasagar Press, Bombay, 1888).

This English rendering of the *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* by the late K. Narayanaswami Aiyer was first published in 1896 (Thomson & Co., Madras) and then in 1914 (Hoe & Co., Madras). It is a free translation trying to present the ideas contained in the text in a lucid

manner, using at times the explanations of the Sanskrit commentaries. The Adyar Library is again bringing this work into print as there has been a demand for it. Some editorial changes have been made. A biographical sketch of the translator has also been included in this edition.

DIRECTOR

INTRODUCTION

It is intended to give here a short introduction to, and an analysis of the *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*. The analysis cannot be an exhaustive one, as it would have then to run through many pages and form another book. There are, at present known to us, two works by the name of *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, the larger one going by the name of *Bṛhad-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* and the smaller one, *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*. The term *bṛhat* means 'great', while *laghu* signifies 'small'. Vāsiṣṭha is because this work emanates from Rṣi Vasiṣṭha as will be seen later on. Though the book has the appellation, *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, it treats of Jñāna only, and practical Yoga is dealt with in two stories in this work. Even there, it is said that the pure Rāja-yoga is meant and not Haṭha-yoga. The word *yoga* seems to have been used in the title of this work in its generic sense, including Jñāna-yoga and other Yoga-s as in the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Of the two above-mentioned works, the smaller one is an abridgment of the bigger, and contains about 6,000 Grantha-s,* whereas the latter contains 36,000. The commentary on the former has the same number of Grantha-s as the original, whereas that of the latter comprises 74,000 Grantha-s, which with its original totals a lakh. In the abridged text, almost all the

* A Grantha equals 32 syllables.

words are reproduced *verbatim* from the bigger one, the work of the author having been generally to clip the bigger version of its expansive descriptions and so on; so that in the work before us, the quintessence is extracted. This work seems to have been undertaken by one Abhinanda, a great Pandit of Kashmir. The authorship is attributed to Ṛṣi Vālmīki, the author of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, who is said to have related the whole of the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* to Ṛṣi Bharadvāja as having occurred between Śrī Rāma and Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha. But of this, later on. The larger work seems to have been partially translated by a gentleman hailing from Bengal. This one, though named small, is yet big enough.

This work is, in the words of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, 'meant for the few only'. In the phraseology of this work, it is intended neither for those Ajñānin-s (the worldly-minded) who welter in the sea of Saṃsāra, without being indifferent to worldly things, nor for those higher spiritual personages who have reached a state of adeptship, so as to be above all advice. Hence, it is written in the interests of those who have become indifferent to worldly things and crave for spirituality to become a potent factor in their daily lives. Fancy a work like *The Voice of the Silence* put into the hands of a worldly person of decidedly materialistic views; he will throw it away in disgust. Similarly will this work not appeal to a person who has not caught even a glimpse of the higher life and principles. A person of true Vairāgya, should he

wish to have not only some hints cast on the nature of the cosmos, *Manas* (mind) and the Universal Spirit from the idealistic standpoint, but also have some rules for guidance in his daily, practical life with the proper illustrations leading towards occult knowledge, will here find, in my opinion, a mine of knowledge to cogitate upon.

There are some peculiar traits in this work, distinguished from other spiritual works in the Sanskrit literature. As all know, the *Veda-s* and the *Upaniṣad-s* are so mystic in their nature in many places that their real meaning is not grasped clearly and all except true occultists—rare to find in this world—interpret them in different ways, one holding that the *Veda-s* inculcate nature worship, another imposing upon them a diametrically opposed view, and so on. Even in the ten *Upaniṣad-s*, all the metaphysical—leaving aside for the present, as impossible, the occult—theories have not been worked out in a systematic manner; only some clues have been vouchsafed thereupon. Taking the *Purāṇa-s* in their dead letter, our Pandits generally have found them replete with indecent and absurd stories and thrown them into a corner; and hence the nickname of *Purāṇa-s* has been applied, in ordinary usage, to refer to anything that is a farrago of fictions and absurdities. But for the timely resurrection of them by H. P. Blavatsky, with the profound ray of light shed upon them by her, almost all of us would, by this time, have unanimously buried in oblivion all works savouring of *Purāṇa-s*. Even she

has not thrown full light on them, as she probably was not privileged so to do. As regard Itihāsa-s, namely the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, they are considered as so many stories only and as such are much in favour with our orthodox Pandits who do not care to go above worldly things. Vedānta soars high in the region of the Absolute with its theories and words; and our metaphysicians of the old school in India, carrying the notion of the physical world up there, try to solve the problem of the homogeneity or otherwise of the Infinite, wrangling with one another, as our Advaitin-s, Viśiṣṭādvaitin-s and Dvaitin-s are doing in their everyday lives, so much so that their arguments end in mental gymnastics only and with nothing practical in their lives. Here a curious instance occurs to me. One day an Advaita Pandit lectured in a certain place about Brahman being *nirguṇa* (or without any attributes) and the only Reality, and argued with great vehemence against his adversary. Next day, seeing him circumambulate an idol in a temple, I asked him to whom he was paying respects. The Pandit merely laughed over the affair without an answer. Thus are most of our Pandits, theorizing only, with nothing practical about them, and soaring into the region of the Absolute without a proper knowledge of the basic foundations of Vedānta.

But the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* has followed a new and distinct path. At first, it enunciates an aspect of the Vedānta doctrine in its several bearings and then elucidates it with beautiful stories. It gives also

rules of guidance for the conduct of life in the world, these also being illustrated in the stories. As in the Purāṇa-s, we have not to rack our brains over the slight hints thrown out and to give up sometimes in despair the problems before us.

Secondly—This book serves as a ladder wherewith to climb from the Śeśvara Sāṃkhya doctrine of Patañjali as given in his *Yogasūtra-s* to the Māyā conception of the Advaita Pantheists, and thus renders possible a reconciliation between them both. Through a study of Patañjali's *Yogasūtra-s*, it is clear from Book III, aphorism 17, that the cause of all pain is the conjunction of the seer with the visual, or the subject with the object; the conception of 'I' having been brought about by the identification of the subject with the object. Through Sākṣātkāra Anubhava or direct realization, the Yogin finds he is one with the subject and does not find then the reality of the object. It is this that is illustrated in the story of Śuka.

• *Theosophy and the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*—Some of the theories and facts, occult, metaphysical or otherwise, given out by H. P. Blavatsky find their corroboration in this work. I have a deep-seated conviction in me which tells me that if Theosophical ideas are ever to gain a firm footing in India, it can only be by showing that H. P. B.'s explanations can throw light upon, and galvanize with life, our old Aryan works. For this purpose, I think all the authorities, express or implied, which are found in a stray form in the Hindu works, should be culled out and given to the world.

As H. P. B. herself said, her business was to string the flowers found in India as well as in other places and make a nosegay out of the same.

Now I shall give some illustrations. They are:

(1) That Parabrahman, the Absolute, is not the cause of the creation of Brahmā or the universe, as creation implies conditioned thought and space, and the Infinite is unconditioned and can therefore have no kind of causal relationship to that which is finite or conditioned, namely the universe which manifests itself or is absorbed according to the Law of the Absolute (vide the story of Śikhidhvaja).

(2) Deva-s and Asura-s are merely the opposite intelligential forces or poles in nature, such as positive and negative. With the cessation of the one aspect, the other also ceases to exist. This statement is to be found in the story of Prahlāda.

(3) In *The Secret Doctrine* of Madame Blavatsky it is stated that the Asura-s, Rudra-s, etc. represent in one sense the egos of man, they being the active powers opposed to the Deva-s, the passive ones. This fact is exemplified in Śukra's story as well as in the story of the one hundred Rudra-s.

(4) The eking out of the double and the means through which such things are done, namely through the mastery of Kuṇḍalinī Śakti are given out in the story of Śikhidhvaja.

(5) Being a work intended for occult students, this book mentions the seven states of Jñāna and Ajñāna (vide Utpatti and Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa-s); the

seven Ajñāna states are not given out in other works I have come across, though the former are.

(6) The relationship between an occult Guru and his Śiṣya or disciple (as appears from the story of Śikhidhvaja).

(7) The experiences of those persons (who are able to elevate themselves beyond their physical bodies) as a Jīva-sūcī or Nivāra-sūka, either as a needle or the tail end of paddy, which is exemplified in the story of Karkatī.

(8) Some of the secret meanings of Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Kāśyapa, etc. as well as of the worship of God.

(9) The reality of thought as in the story of Gādhi.

(10) The emergence of all objects from the moon after a minor deluge.

VAIRĀGYA PRAKARAṆA

Without multiplying more instances of this kind, I shall now proceed to the contents of this work. The occasion which called it forth indicates that the work is intended for those only who wish to travel practically on the higher path. Most of our readers will have been fully acquainted with the contents of our great epic poem, the *Rāmāyaṇa*. We find there that Ṛṣi Viśvāmitra makes his appearance in the early years of Śrī Rāma. The Ṛṣi appears before Rāma's father, Daśaratha, and demands of him his son Rāma to war with

the Rākṣasa-s interfering with his sacrifice. Just before this time, Rāma goes on a pilgrimage to the many sacred places; and having visited the Āśrama-s (hermitages) of the wise, he returns to his capital. On his return, he is disgusted with this material life, spurns his wealth and other regal possessions and grows despondent, not performing any of his daily duties. His attendants complain to the king, his father, of the grievous plight of their master. Thereupon, the father sends for his son, seats him near him and inquires of him his state. But the son evades the question by laughing over the affair and gets away. At this juncture, Muni Viśvāmitra turns up and the king, delighted with the arrival of such a distinguished and revered guest, consents to execute any order of the noble Muni. The Muni demands Rāma to aid him, at which Daśaratha is panic-struck. Yet rallying himself, he volunteers his own services in lieu of his eldest and dearly beloved boy, begotten through hard Tapas. Immediately, the Muni is about to curse Daśaratha for his vacillation in the fulfilment of his promises, when Vasiṣṭha intervenes and pacifies the sage by making the king fulfil his promise. Then Rāma is sent for. His servants meanwhile relate to the Rṣi-s the pitiable plight of their master, disdaining to perform such actions as tasting food, drinking water, etc. At which Vasiṣṭha remarks that the Vairāgya (indifference of) the prince is not akin to that produced by such momentary accidents as the loss of some dearly loved relative or wealth, but is one which is the premonitory symptom

of a spiritual development in him—after which development all his duties would be regularly performed by him. On Rāma's arrival at the regal assembly, he is asked by one of the Ṛṣi-s about the cause of his sorrow. At which Rāma makes a long tirade against wealth, life, Ahaṃkāra, Manas (mind), desires, body and other material things, and at last winds up by saying that he would rather expose himself to the torments of hell-fire than undergo the excruciating mental tortures consuming him little by little because of the above-mentioned causes. This concludes the chapter called Vairāgya Prakaraṇa or the section on indifference to worldly things.

MUMUKṢU PRAKARAṆA

This work consists of six Prakaraṇa-s or sections. Passing over the first, namely Vairāgya Prakaraṇa, which has appended to it the story of Śuka, the son of the present Vyāsa, we have five other Prakaraṇa-s, namely Mumukṣu (longing after liberation), Utpatti (origin), Sthiti (preservation), Upaśānti (quiescence) and Nirvāṇa (absorption), the last. In these five chapters, Vasiṣṭha gives advice to Rāma, telling him the reason why he should work in the world and how, by tracing the origin of the universe and the 'I' in man—which are identical from the idealistic standpoint—to the Original Cause or the Causeless Cause of all, and devising means for their destruction. He finally initiates him into the mysteries of Ātman.

First comes the story of Śuka in the first Prakaraṇa. Śuka was not satisfied with all the explanations his father Vyāsa gave of Māyā, and hence resorted to Janaka for aid who, by Aparokṣa or direct realization within himself, showed him the end. Then comes the second Prakaraṇa called Mumukṣu. Of the fourfold qualifications necessary to a disciple on the path, namely the discrimination between Ātman and non-Ātman, etc. Rāma, having developed the first three, is asked by Vasiṣṭha to concentrate his mind upon the attainment of Mokṣa. For this purpose, Vasiṣṭha expatiates in Mumukṣu Prakaraṇa upon the preliminary qualifications necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. Here the author says that the four sentinels posted at the gate of Mokṣa are Śānti (quiescence of mind or sweet patience), Vicāra (the inquiry after Ātman), Saṁtoṣa (contentment of mind) and Sādhusaṅga (association with the wise) and that these will have to be befriended by one wishing to attain Mokṣa. Should one of them at least be befriended, he would introduce the aspirant to his companion sentinels. Then the author goes on to explain that Mokṣa does not mean physical isolation from worldly affairs, but only a state of mind bereft of impure Vāsanā-s, of not clinging to, but yet working as usual amidst, worldly things. The difference between Vāsanā-s, pure and impure, is well defined in this chapter.

Having thus spoken of the nature of the goal towards which all egos are gravitating, Vasiṣṭha, in order to relieve Rāma of the mental despair and anguish

in which he was, then traces the origin of 'I', its growth and its quiescence, and then describes that state from which the above three states can be viewed as one. For this purpose, he describes its relationship with the one Reality and the universe. This is precisely the position in which Arjuna was placed when he was instructed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa as in the *Bhagavadgītā* and when he was told of the relationship existing between the Universal Spirit, the ego and the cosmos; the difference being that the detailed instructions in this work are not given on a veritable battlefield, but in that of the mind, and are illustrated by a series of stories wherein the different stages of the mind are detailed to suit a disciple on the path. Now, taking his stand on the pantheistic conception of Brahman being the one Reality and the universe, and the Jīva as its aspect or manifestation, Vasiṣṭha begins the Utpatti Prakaraṇa with the statement that the Jīva or ego in man and the universe in their innate condition are Brahman only and this phenomenal universe is but an outcome of the Divine Will appearing to be real through the workings of the mind. In the technical phraseology of this work, the ideation reflected in the Līlā-Saṃkalpa of Brahman is the origin of the world; its manifestation, the preservation of the world; and its disappearance, the destruction of the world. These are the three aspects that are dilated upon in the second, third and fourth Prakaraṇa-s. In other words, the old Hindu philosophers held that the universe is nothing but states or modes of consciousness reflected through the

Saṃkalpa or will of Parabrahman which is said, through its Law, to evolve the universe out of itself for its Līlā or sport. The word *saṃkalpa* is rather a difficult word to translate. Originally it is the Divine Will in manifestation and in man in his present stage becomes the will-thought pertaining to his Antaḥkaraṇa or the lower mind. It is through the Saṃkalpa of our Manas that the universe appears to be and it is this Saṃkalpa that has to be given up by one who wishes to soar to the one Reality beyond this universe. The author of this work defines Saṃkalpa in one chapter to mean the ideation of Aham or 'I' which arises in the relationship of subject to object when conditioning is brought about.

UTPATTI PRAKARAṆA

In beginning the Utpatti Prakaraṇa, the author relates a story to illustrate Parabrahman manifesting itself as Brahmā, the Creator, with the conception of 'I' through its own Saṃkalpa. Instead of relating, as in the Purāṇa-s, that the Creator, Brahmā, arose out of the navel of Nārāyaṇa with four hands, etc. this work states that, out of the one vast Ākāśa of Jñāna, or the one Plenum of abstract Intelligence, a Brahmin, the primeval ego called Ākāśaja was born, who lived for a long time before Kāla (Time) wanted to get at him and bring him into his clutches but was unable to do so because of the radiant Tejas (lustre) that shone about his person. Then Kāla consulted with Yama (Death) who also is the personification of

Time, but in the lower or Rūpa planes, and advised the former to go in quest of any of the past Karman-s of the Brahmin, which were found to be nil. Thereupon, Yama is said to have remarked to Kāla that the Brahmin was no other than Brahmā himself; though performing Karman-s, Brahmā had nothing clinging to him, as he did not perform them for any selfish purposes of his own. From this it will be clear that, ere creation began, there was one vast space or Ākāśa, with no activity in it, that is the noumenal state of Parabrahman. When evolution began, three kinds or states of Ākāśa are said to have evolved, namely Jñānākāśa, Cidākāśa and Bhūtākāśa. The last is the elemental Ākāśa compounded of the quintuplicated five elements, Ākāśa, Vāyu, etc. whereas Cidākāśa corresponds to the plane of the lower mind. Jñānākāśa corresponds to the third body or plane. The first ego of Brahmā which is differentiated into many is then, in the story of Līlā, traced in its workings in the three Ākāśa-s above-mentioned. The three pairs introduced therein are (1) Līlā and Padma, (2) Arundhatī and Vasiṣṭha, (3) Vidūratha and his spouse. In the story of Karkatī, we come to the lowest stage, whether of the man or of the world. The intelligence or Puruṣa that pervades the physical body is described in this story. In the Upaniṣad-s and other books, the Puruṣa in this stage is likened to a thread or the tail end of paddy. As stated in this work further on, the normal experience of humanity now is of being no other than the physical body, though some may, in theory, hold that they are

different from the body; the second experience is the direct perception of being a thread-like substance in the gross body, different from the gross one. In the third state, they rise to a direct experience of being the universe. The Rākṣasī Karkatī, having a voracious stomach, was unable fully to gratify her appetite, and hence got a boon from Brahmā to enter as a Jīva-sūcī or living needle into all human beings, with the power of troubling those of lower desires, but becoming the slaves of those who are conquerors of them. It is this Rākṣasī who is at the bottom of all our pain and who can be made to minister to our wants, if we will only make up our minds to control our desires.

The story of Aindava corroborates the occult doctrine. The author, after describing the universe as an aspect of the Brahmic intelligence, now proceeds to the enumeration of the worlds that exist. At the beginning of a creation, Brahmā is said to have asked the resplendent orb of the sun to describe its origin. The sun and its nine brother suns are said to have been born out of Indu—since according to the Hindu or occult doctrine all things merge into the moon during Pralaya—the son of Kaśyapa, and to be ruling over the ten worlds created by their own Saṃkalpa, as if they were Brahmā-s themselves. Hence arose the ten worlds out of their minds. These ten worlds may refer either to the ten solar systems, or the ten worlds which are subtler and subtler and existing in space. Besides the seven worlds as ordinarily known, there are said to be at first three other worlds which have arisen

out of the one. Out of the one arise at first the three Loka-s of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra, who originate and work in the seven worlds, Bhū, Bhuvar, etc. up to Satya. Then are introduced the stories of the wily Indra, Citta and a lad to exemplify the illusory nature of the universe. In the story of Śāmbarika, the Siddha, the illusory nature of time is also illustrated. Thus eight stories conclude this chapter wherein is traced the initial stage of the origin of 'I'; and the fact is exemplified that the universe arises out of the mere Saṃkalpa of the original creator, both the universe and Jīva, the intelligence, arising as the illusory aspect of the one Substratum.

STHITI PRAKARAṆA

This section deals with the Sthiti character or the preservative aspect of the mind or the universe. In the first story of Śukra, the ego is made to pass, after its origin, through a series of births in a time appearing very short to his father Bhṛgu, who was then engaged in Nirvikalpa Samādhi near his son and hence in higher planes. Students of esoteric literature know full well that, of all the planets, Śukra or Venus corresponds to our ego or the higher Manas. This higher Manas and the ray of Ātman or Buddhi pass through the different forms of humanity as well as the lower ones. The author next proceeds to tell the curious story of Dāma and two others to illustrate how the 'I' in man develops itself in him after innumerable births, with the Ahaṃkāra we find in him now. Once upon a

time, there raged a war between the Deva-s and the Asura-s. The latter, finding themselves worsted in it, created through the Māyāvic power of their leader three men without Ahaṃkāra or the conception of 'I' in them to fight their opponents, since one without Ahaṃkāra can face his enemy without the least fear, and regardless of the consequences of his actions. The Deva-s, finding their enemy too tough to deal with, applied to the higher powers for help. Viṣṇu advised them to adopt a rather queer plan, that of again and again pretending to make war with their opponents and of again and again retiring from the field, when their enemy made onslaughts against them. By this process, they were told by Viṣṇu, the 'I' in the Māyāvic personages would be provoked and hardened and those personages would grow terribly afraid of the results of the war and be discomfited through the generation of 'I' in them. This procedure was adopted and the Deva-s gained the day. After this, three others of true Jñāna and hence without Ahaṃkāra were created afresh by the Asura-s and sent against the Deva-s. Finding them too hard to combat, the passive powers, the Deva-s, again implored to Viṣṇu for aid. In this instance, Viṣṇu came directly to the field of battle and took the three Māyāvic personages away, as men of true Jñāna find their asylum in Him alone. Thus we find that the desires of the external world which have at first no hold on the subtle 'I' in this world gain a hold and develop through, as it were, a play with it. It thus takes a long time ere the evil desires take possession

of the heart. Likewise, many births are required for their eradication. Both these stages are necessary for a progressing ego. The ego should first be absorbed in desires and be tinged with Ahaṁkāra, so that, through such a course, it may learn the necessary lessons and after the lessons are learnt, it no longer needs the desires and abandons them. This is the reason why, in that valuable work called *The Light on the Path*,* it is said: 'Seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it. It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death. And it is a plant that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when the man has accumulated unto himself innumerable existences.'

Then this Prakaraṇa, having in all five stories, ends with those of Dāśūra and Kaca wherein it is sought to explain that, though the universe appears to be real in itself in this stage, it is nothing but Ātmic Saṁkalpa or a mode of the consciousness of Ātman. It is in this Prakaraṇa that the three modes of Ahaṁkāra are mentioned. The first is the stage where the man identifies himself with the physical body which is the lowest of Ahaṁkāra-s and ought to be shunned. The second is where one identifies himself with a thread-like wire. In the third stage, he finds he is all this universe. These three stages correspond to the gross, subtle and causal bodies of man and are the intelligences

* The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.

presiding over them. Beyond these is Turya, the fourth stage where one is above the universe and identified with the Spirit itself.

UPAŚĀNTI OR UPAŚAMA PRAKARAṆA

This is the section which deals with the quiescence of the mind after its sport in the universe. This Prakaraṇa has nine stories in which it is stated that quiescence of mind can be obtained only after many births. To achieve this state, many means are given, such as obtaining the Lord's grace through Bhakti or devotion, direct knowledge of Māyā, Yoga, Ātma-Vicāra or Ātmic inquiry, and Citta-Nirodha or the control of mind, Prāṇāyāma, etc. King Janaka sees all as Cidānanda and reaches a higher state. Puṇya and Pāvana reach the goal after the lapse of many births. Bali of the Trivikrama Avatāra performed actions with Niṣkāma (without reference to their fruit). Prahlāda ever worshipped the lotus feet of Īśvara. Gādhi, the father of Viśvāmitra, had a direct perception of Māyā and thence of God, since the Absolute cannot be seen without overcoming Māyā. Ātma-Vicāra or Ātmic inquiry was the ceaseless means adopted by Uddālaka and Suraghu. Bhāsa and Vilāsa put an end to all their pain through the same course. Vītahavya resorted to Prāṇāyāma or the control of breath for the subjugation of his mind.

The story of Gādhi is worthy of being reproduced here. Having been daily engaged in meditation in

water, he one day wished to know the nature of Māyā and was blessed by Viṣṇu, the Higher Self—here represented as a dark blue cloud—with the boon of seeing Māyā directly and of overcoming it. Some days after, as he was going to a tank, his mind recurred to the boon of Viṣṇu; and when he stepped into the tank, he was entranced and vividly remembered, in his normal state, all the lives he had led during his Samādhi, as a Brahmin and as a Caṇḍāla (outcaste). Not knowing the reason why these visions arose, he returned home where he met with a guest who uttered some words which went to prove that his dream in the tank was a reality. So, in order to verify the same he went to the many places pointed out by the guest, and found all the events of his dream realized as an actuality in the waking state. This story illustrates the fact that the many lives we are going through in our present state of Ajñāna are like dream-lives which, though they may appear true as if in our waking states, are yet not so, when a high stage of spiritual development arises. In the story of Vīṭahavya with which this Prakaraṇa winds up, the different stages of his development on the uttering of the sacred word, Praṇava, are described. To produce a control of the mind, two things are essential, Prāṇa-Nirodha and Saṅga-Tyāga, namely the control of Prāṇa and renunciation of Saṅga or association. By the latter is meant not dissociation from the world but only the longing after, or the attraction towards, the objects of the world. By Prāṇa-Nirodha, the author expressly states

that he does not mean to speak of the Haṭha-Yogic form but only of the Rāja-Yogic one.

NIRVĀṆA-PRAKARAṆA

This last section has fourteen stories in it. The ego in this stage reaches the Turya or fourth state, after the developed one has crossed 'the three Halls' and is able to have a commanding view of the lower stages. This Prakaraṇa begins with the story of Bhuṣuṇḍa, the great Yogin. Bhuṣuṇḍa, meaning a crow, typifies a great spiritual power existing from a very remote period through marvellous Yoga strength and, according to his own version, had witnessed Vasiṣṭha-s born eight times, Hiraṇyākṣa-s diving with the earth down into Pātāla thrice, Dakṣa, the Prajāpati losing the sacrifice twice, and other mysteries. Then comes the story of Deva-Pūjā. Here is stated the true rationale of the Pūjā or worship of God now conducted by the Hindus. All form-worships are intended for men in the lower stages alone. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, etc. are only developed entities. Jñāna alone is the true God and the flowers, etc. with which God has to be worshipped are equal vision over all, contentment of mind, spiritual wisdom, etc. Of course this is likely to disturb the equilibrium of our orthodox men; but facts cannot be gainsaid and should be given out. After some stories are over, the story of Arjuna comes, wherein Karman-s are asked to be performed without caring for their fruit. But the best story of

all in this Prakaraṇa is that of Śikhidhvaja. Some years ago it was published in *The Theosophist* in a series of articles. The author impresses on a disciple, through this story, the necessity of a Guru, an adept and not an ordinary teacher, in order to lead him on into the higher pursuit of occult mysteries. Otherwise the disciple will only be like the blind led by the blind. He is asked to place implicit faith in the words of such a Guru. The Master can truly impress his thoughts upon the student's mind only when it is rendered passive to that of the teacher. Otherwise no real progress in occultism is possible. But the Hindus of modern days have degraded this idea to such an extent as to exact the same kind of obedience from an ordinary student towards an ordinary teacher. Some other points have also to be noticed in this story. True renunciation lies not in immuring oneself in a closet or going to a forest, but in performing one's Karman-s with mental abnegation. One should neither court fresh Karman-s nor shirk the old ones that are peculiarly his. This should be the attitude of a true Jñānin. True renunciation or Saṃnyāsa is finally illustrated in this story. King Śikhidhvaja, after leaving his kingdom, retires into the forest. There his wife, herself an adept, visits him in her Māyāvī-rūpa or double, assuming a male physical form and passing by the name of Kumbha-Muni. When the king found that this supposed Muni was a personage of great power, he took him as his Guru, having consented to the two conditions imposed upon him as in other cases of

initiation, namely implicit faith in, and acting upon, the words of the Guru, and repeated efforts to be made for the entire control of the mind. Then the Muni remarks that the king's pain was caused by want of true Saṁnyāsa or renunciation. The king replies that he gave up his kingdom, wealth, wife, etc. and retired into the forest and wishes to know if that is not true renunciation. 'No', the Muni replies. Then the king gives up his love for the forest in which he is and asks if that does not constitute true renunciation. Again the same negative word came out of the lips of the Muni. Then the king consigns the bowl, cloth, etc. which alone he has, into the fire, and wishes to know if that is not Saṁnyāsa. Again the same negative reply was given. Then the king ruminates over his situation; it is sin on his part to gainsay his Master's words; and hence he dives into himself and finds that the last encumbrance in him is his body which he wants to dispose of by ascending a high cliff and precipitating it down the same, which the Muni prevents him from doing and remarks that true renunciation lies in the mind and not in external things such as the body. Then the Muni sets the king aright by going into the origin of pain.

Here also is given out the dual nature of Manas, the mind, the pure one being purely Sāttvic in nature and the impure one being full of Rajas and Tamas. The author says clearly that the non-dual Reality which exists amidst the many heterogeneous things of the world can be cognized through one's self-cognition.

only and not by any length of words or logic or thought. Therefore if a person who is a Jīvanmukta cognizes through Samādhi the absolute identity of all things, and yet moves as usual in this world, then he will in course of time reach a state called Videha-mukti, when he will throw aside all bodily shackles and merge into the absolute font of Bliss. As at the end of every Prakaraṇa, there is a chapter which summarizes the subjects dealt with, this Prakaraṇa also closes with a chapter called Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa, in which are described the seven states of Jñāna and the seven states of Ajñāna dealt with in a previous chapter.

As regards the age of this work, we leave it to competent authorities to theorize as best as they may. The events recorded herein should have occurred in the Tretāyuga, when Rāma incarnated. But in the initiation of Rāma by Vasiṣṭha as recorded in this work, we find the story of Arjuna introduced. Is it not an anachronism, some may ask? We shall find this objection will vanish into thin air if we bear in mind the fact that nature cycles round and round and was not a sealed book to our ancients. Every recurrence of the Yuga-s brings with it its own Vyāsa-s, Rāma-s and others. Therefore, before the divine vision of our omniscient Ṛṣi-s, all the events, past as well as future, march in one procession as recorded in the tablets of Citragupta. This is the objection which many Orientalists have taken without understanding exactly the views of the Hindus as regards the book of nature. This reply to the objection made is

one that has been urged by some of our medieval commentators.

Whether the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* is considered as an authority or not, it is a matter of perfect indifference so far as inquiring minds who are thirsting after real knowledge are concerned. We judge every work on its own merits and according to that canon of interpretation, we leave this work to the public to be judged. There are many repetitions in this work which are inevitable in a Hindu religious book treating of the most abstruse questions of philosophy and occultism. This work may well be called an amplified version of *The Voice of the Silence* of Madame Blavatsky dressed in Hindu garb. We launch out this translation of the *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* with the conviction that full justice has not been done to the original.

It will be found that in many places in this work the translation is free and many Sanskrit words have been left untranslated. Undoubtedly, in a work like this teeming with stories, a literal translation would but mar the original. There are two reasons which induced me to retain the Sanskrit words in this work. Some of the terms used do not have proper English equivalents and hence require periphrastic expressions to convey rightly the underlying ideas. Many of the terms have become commonly known to readers of Vedāntic literature. To understand this work fully, its predecessor, the *Vāsudeva-Manana* or 'The meditations on Vāsudeva', a compendium of Advaita philosophy will be of great help. One new feature of the present

translation is the summary given of every chapter or story.

In this effort of mine, I was greatly assisted by my late lamented co-worker R. Sundareswara Sastri. My thanks are especially due to Bertram Keightley, the General Secretary of the Indian Section, The Theosophical Society, for the great help he rendered in revising my manuscript; also to N. Ramanujachariar, and B. S. Raghuthamachariar, for their kindly suggestions and aid during the progress of this work.

K. N.

KUMBAKONAM

1896

LAGHU-YOGA-VĀSISTHA

I. VAIRĀGYA PRAKARAṆA

SALUTATIONS to the Non-dual Principle—through the three organs (of mind, speech and body)—that is the eternal Jñāna (wisdom) Light illuminating (the three worlds) Bhū (earth), Antarikṣa (intervening space) and Svarga (heaven), as also our hearts and their exteriors and that has manifested itself everywhere as visible forms.

Persons qualified to read this work called *Vāsiṣṭha* (the work of Vasiṣṭha) should neither be Ajñānin-s (the ignorant or the worldly wise), nor those Jīvan-mukta-s (liberated ones) who have reached their Jñānātman, freeing themselves from all pain, but only those who, conscious of being under bondage, long for freedom, and are in that vacillating position from which they contemplate attaining Mōkṣa.

Muni Bharadvāja having prostrated before his omniscient Guru, Muni Vālmīki, addressed him softly thus: How did Śrī Rāma of rare *sattvaguna* come to be in this terrestrial Saṃsāra (mundane existence) full of pain and generative of dire rebirths.

To which Vālmīki replied thus: My son¹ Bhara-dvāja, thy question is fraught with incalculable happiness

Son¹ here refers to a disciple.

(to thee and all the world). Thou art in possession of the fourfold¹ means of salvation which entitle thee to question me about Nirvāṇic bliss. Hence hearken to what I am going to say to thee. Thereby thou wilt be able to master Ajñāna which is the source of all pain. This illusory universe manifests itself, though it really is not, in Parabrahman (the one Reality), like the blue colour which is unreal, though it appears in the sky overhead. The supreme Nirvāṇic bliss is attained the moment when one, after having decided in himself that it will be definitely beneficial not in the least to bring to recollection this illusion of a universe, cognizes, through intuitive spiritual perception, the unreality of the universe which appears as real to the mind that is of the nature of Saṃskāra-s (self-reproductive thoughts). This supreme Bliss is ever shining, not created by any, self-existent and imperishable. But it cannot be cognized and enjoyed by those ignorant persons who wallow in the mere pitfalls of the Śāstra-s (book-learning) inculcating the lower (terrestrial) wisdom, as contra-distinguished from the higher (Divine) wisdom, which is free of the recollection of things visible. The wise say that the best thing for a man to do in this world is to give up, without the least longing, Vāsanā-s (affinities for objects)

¹ The fourfold means are: (1) The discrimination of Ātman and non-Ātman, (2) Indifference to the enjoyments of objects both in this world and the higher, (3) Śama, Dama, Uparati, Titikṣā, Samādhāna and Śraddhā, (4) Mumukṣutva or the longing after liberation.

which cause the mind to fluctuate, and that such abdication constitutes the eternal Mokṣa (liberation) and the stainless path.

Vāsanā-s are of two kinds. The impure Vāsanā-s are those which, generating rebirths, are terrible in their results, while the pure ones are those which liberate one from such rebirths. The great ones say that the generation of the ever-recurrent cycle of rebirths when excessive Ahaṁkāra (egoism) is developed in the body, which is nothing but a transformation of Ajñāna, is termed the impure Vāsanā-s; while the pure Vāsanā-s, which free one from rebirth, may be likened to a seed that will not sprout after being fried (in a pan) over red-hot fire. Those who, having developed the pure Vāsanā-s, support a body simply to wear out their Prārabdha¹ Karman-s, and do not again subject themselves to the pangs of rebirth, may be said to have attained the Jīvan-mukti state (embodied liberation) which enables one to perceive all spiritual things through subtle Jñāna experience, and to enjoy the bliss of Cidānanda (conscious bliss state).

Again Muni Vālmīki continued thus: Mayest thou, Oh my son, liberate thyself from births and deaths after meditating truly, through thy intelligence, upon the path pointed out by Vasiṣṭha to Rāma, who heard him intently and reached the glorious and incomparable Jīvan-mukti state. Becoming well versed in all the four Veda-s and all the departments of knowledge,

¹ Prārabdha Karman-s are those past actions, the results of which are being experienced during the present birth.

Rāma spent his youth sportively, and hence fearlessly, for some time. After such days of enjoyment, there arose in him a desire to visit all places of pilgrimage able to confer spiritual benefits and the sacred Āśrama-s (hermitages) of the wise. For this purpose, Rāma of blue complexion and lotus eyes, approached his father like a Haṃsa (swan), and having prostrated himself before his lotus feet addressed him thus: 'Oh father, my mind longs to visit the ancient places of pilgrimage, sacred shrines, and the forest resorts where the Muni-s perform their Tapas (religious austerities). There is no boon, however great, which it is not in thy power to grant. Please therefore be kind enough to allow me to carry out my intentions.' Thereupon Daśaratha (his father), in consultation with his world-famous teacher, Vasiṣṭha, gave his assent to it with a request to his son to return soon.

Then Rāma of blue complexion, having paid due respects to his father, set out on his holy pilgrimage along with his brothers on an auspicious day. Having crossed their Kosala kingdom, they spent their days delightfully, passing through and observing all kinds of rivers, forests in which Tapas was performed, the hermitages of ascetics, sandy deserts, seaport towns, slopes of hills, etc. Then Rāma eulogized by Deva-s (celestials) and worshipped by men, returned like Īśa (the lord) and Jayanta, son of Indra, returning to Śivapura and Devaloka respectively, and reached, amidst thick showers of flowers and praise of men, Ayodhyā where his father resided. There he described

in detail all the events of his trip and the diverse customs obtaining in different countries.

Thereafter, he was in the habit of rising up daily from his bed before daybreak and performing his daily ceremonies. Having paid due respects to his father, Daśaratha, he would daily hear stories pregnant with wisdom and justice from the lips of Vasiṣṭha and other Muni-s of great Tapas. According to the directions of his father, he would be sometimes engaged in the chase along with his retinue. Having supped with his relatives, friends and brothers, he would pass his night sweetly. Thus did he pass his fifteenth year, assisting and pleasing kings and others, like the cool moon or delicious nectar. At this period of his life, his once radiant body became all at once emaciated, like the river floods going down in summer; his face with its long eyes became wan like a white lotus; and he ever seated himself in the Padma posture, with his hands resting on his chin, and his young feet tinkling with bells. Then wholly absorbed in pensive thought, he forgot to perform his daily allotted duties of life, and his mind grew despondent. His followers, noticing the ever statue-like position their master assumed, fell at his feet and asked him the cause of his moody temper. To which Rāma merely replied by performing his daily rites with such a depressed mind and dejected face as affected all who saw it. Being apprised of this fact, his father Daśaratha sent for him one day, and having seated him close to himself, asked him to explain the cause of his grief. Rāma merely prostrated himself

at his father's feet and took leave of him, saying there was nothing.

At this juncture, the world-famed Muni Viśvāmitra appeared in the council hall of the king. Thereupon, the king of kings, Daśaratha, having saluted the Muni and paid, according to custom, due respect to him, addressed him thus: 'Thou wert pleased, through thy kind grace, to vouchsafe me a visit at a time when thy servant least anticipated it. Thy presence has removed all my sins. I am now like a lotus which has blossomed fully at the approach of the sun. Never before did I feel the bliss I do now. To me thy presence here resembles the rain cooling the plants suffering from long drought, or sight miraculously recovered by a blind person. The bliss arising from the advent of thy venerable self has cooled my whole body like Gaṅgā water and removed all depression from my heart, as if this very body of mine had arisen to move in the Ākāśa, or as if the Jīva that once departed out of a body came in again to tenant it, or as if I had come by the nectar vase deposited within the fortress of Agni in Devaloka and containing ambrosia churned out of the roaring ocean of milk. Oh Muni of rare Tapas, free from attachment and hatred, the pain of sensual objects, instability, vain anger, dire births and disease, thy arrival here has taken me by surprise. I consent to part with āny object thou expectest to receive from me. Therefore please intimate to me thy wish.'

Thereupon the supreme Muni, with the hairs of his body standing on end, said: 'Oh Mahārāja Daśaratha,

thou who hast many kings under thy subjection, and contravene not the words of thy Guru Vasiṣṭha, thou hast delivered thyself of words that are well befitting one descended from the noble Sūrya (solar) family. Unable to bear the atrocities committed by the Rākṣasa-s who stand in the way of my attempt at the performance of one of the foremost of sacrifices (*yajña-s*), I have come to thee for redress. I hope, therefore, that thou wilt hand over to me thy eldest son Rāghava (Rāma), of great probity, who is Yama (Death) to the delusion-producing Rākṣasa-s, being, as he is, a lion in strength and Devendra in intrepidity. Rāghava will easily put an end to the invincible Rākṣasa-s. Therefore, Oh king, cast aside all fears about him on the score of his youth. Muni-s like me never direct their minds to dubious matters which involve persons in pain. It is only men like myself and Vasiṣṭha who can really gauge the unfathomable greatness of Rāma, who is superior to all. If thou carest for greatness, Dharma (virtues) and fame, then thou shouldst hand Rāma over to me at once. There is nothing which truly noble persons withhold from a suppliant. If thou wilt give him to me, I tell thee truly that Rāma will annihilate the brave Rākṣasa-s.'

Hearing these words of Viśvāmitra, Daśaratha was bewildered and after a Muhūrta (forty-eight minutes), breathed forth the following words in a plaintive tone: 'My son is very young, being not yet turned sixteen. He has not fought up to now. Therefore he will not be able to cope with the Rākṣasa-s of terrible prowess.'

He is quite ignorant of the tactics of war in meeting his foes. Therefore thy poor servant will himself go in his stead with the fourfold army and fight with them. Should Rāma, my eldest son, part from here, my other three sons will not find themselves alive afterwards. Nor is it likely that I shall outlive, one moment, his separation. Now I am not afraid of any enemy other than Rāvaṇa, though before I was not afraid even of him. Will the courage of warriors who make their enemies retreat before them be ever a fixed quantity? Time, in its revolution works miraculous changes in all things. The mighty become weaklings. As I am old, I am grieved as to what I should do hereafter.'

Thereupon, Viśvāmitra said with great wrath: 'Having promised me first, thou hast overstepped truth. A war-like, leonine king like thee, to conduct thyself like a paltry beast! Thou mayest live happily with thy wife, sons, and other relatives. I will repair to the place whence I came.' Observing these events taking place, Vasiṣṭha interposed and said to Daśaratha: 'Born as thou art in the race of Manu, and dubbed with the title, Emperor Daśaratha, thou shouldst preserve inviolate thy word. If thy tongue should err, who else will maintain his word? If thy subjects on this earth are unfailingly to act up to the strict justice enunciated by thee with a spirit of true reformation, then, Oh king, thou shouldst not fail to act up to it. This Muni Viśvāmitra will protect thy son Rāghava completely, like ambrosia guarded by fire (in Devaloka),

and therefore the Rākṣasa-s, who have war only as their avocation, will not be able to inflict the least injury on thy son.' At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Daśaratha of puissant arms inquired of the followers of Rāma as to what he, whom he obtained through the grace of the great Ones, was doing. Thereupon they began to describe in the following manner the grievous plight of their master, ever since his return from pilgrimage: 'It is only after entreating him, by falling at his feet, that he performs some of the daily ceremonies. He asks of what avail are pleasure-giving offspring, wealth, house, etc. being, as they are, only unreal? Our master has no inclination towards valuable white cloths or dainties having the six tastes¹ or cool water or anything else. Like ascetics devoid of all egoism, he is free from all *abhimāna* (identification of self with objects), and has no inclination towards state-affairs; he neither rejoices at happiness, nor is he afflicted by pain. He grievously complains of his life being spent in vain in the many worldly actions that do not contribute to the Jīvan-mukti state wherein sorrows are unknown. Thinking that his great wealth is a source of infinite danger, he has given up all longing for it, and gives it away indiscriminately to all. We are not able to divine the underlying thought in his heart. Oh for one in this assembly who will be pleased to instil into our young king all the noble qualities

¹ Taste is divided into six categories, namely *kaṭu* (pungent or hot), *amla* (sour), *madhura* (sweet), *lavaṇa* (saltish), *tikta* (bitter) and *kaṣāya* (astringent).

that will befit him to be a ruler of our kingdom! These are the characteristics which our prince evinces.'

At these submissive words of Rāma's followers, Viśvāmitra told them: 'Go ye and fetch this greatly beloved Rāma (unknown to others) who is like a deer that has strayed away from its herd.' Then addressing the assembly, he said: 'The great dejection that has now arisen in him is unlike any that springs out of (disappointment as to) any desired object or out of a great accident; it is only (the stepping stone to) the acquisition of divine wisdom through (Vairāgya) indifference to worldly objects, and (Viveka) true discrimination. Like us, he will attain the quiescent state of Brahman after removing from his mind all delusion through the many-sided reasonings of the stainless Ātmic enquiry. Rāma's mind will soon become full and then he will perform sweetly and nobly all actions on behalf of men.' While the Muni was saying this, Rāma appeared before the regal assembly and prostrated himself at the feet of his father, and then at the feet of Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Brahmins well versed in all departments of knowledge, and the teachers imparting learning. Then having received the prostrations of his inferiors, he recognized their salutations with words of respect and gestures of the eye. On the king asking him to come over and sit next to him on the throne, he merely spread his folded cloth on the ground and sat on it without going up to him. At which the king addressed him thus: 'Oh my son of rare knowledge, why shouldst thou, whom all should

look up to as the source of eternal bliss, pine away thus, even for a moment, with your body emaciated and thy mind despondent, like the ignorant? Men like thee with a mind bereft of desire have attained easily the Nirvāṇic state, as stated by our Guru Vasiṣṭha, who is a revered sage and a Brahmarṣi. Then why art thou grieved thus in vain? Those accidents that bring on pain will never approach thee, should thy present delusion depart.'

After Daśaratha, the crowned king of kings, had said this, Vasiṣṭha began, when Viśvāmitra interrupted him thus: 'Oh, thou redoubted champion that hast conquered easily thy enemies, the sensual objects which are invincible except through supreme effort, drown not thyself in the ocean of delusion full of Ajñāna which is befitting only the ever-fluctuating, ignorant persons of the world. If thou wilt reveal to me the cause of the delusion, preying upon thee like subterranean rats undermining a good house, then thou wilt be relieved of it, and also be able to attain thy longed-for object. Moreover, thy mental grief will thereby vanish to appear no more. Please therefore speak out.' At these words of Viśvāmitra, Rāma relieved of all grief and jubilant, like a peacock at hearing the thunder sound in the clouds when the air becomes cool, addressed Viśvāmitra thus: 'Oh supreme Muni, incarnation of grace and of great Tapas, as thou art pleased to allow my ignorant self to relate the cause of my grief, I will do so. Now please hear of the impediments in my way.

‘Born in the house of Daśaratha, my father, I became well versed in all departments of knowledge and conducted myself strictly according to the dictates of religion. Then I circumambulated this earth girt by the ocean, bathing as I went in the many sacred waters. With my return from the pilgrimage, all my desires for this delusion which is the universe have ceased. There is not even an iota of bliss in this world. Destruction (death) exists only for birth, and birth is for death again. Therefore all things are illusory in this world. All worldly things are generative of pain only, fraught with dangers, unrelated to one another, related to one another only through the Saṃkalpa of the mind, obdurate like an iron rod, and fruitful of great (material) wealth. Therefore of what avail are the enjoyments of objects and kingdoms? If we set about inquiring whence came the “I” of the body we have, we find that all those things which are foreign to Ātman are unreal. All things being unreal, when I began further to inquire as to which generates which among these things, I ceased to have any love for them, like a traveller who, when he is convinced that the undulating mirage in a desert is not water, never after craves for it. In trying to find out the path which will relieve me from the pain emanating from the unconquerable sensual objects, I am burning like an old tree which is consumed within, through the heat generated by itself in its old age. This unbearable delusion of mine is like a stone sticking in my gullet. Being afraid lest my relatives should condemn me for this grief of mine,

I tried in all manner of ways to overcome it and yet I am not able to get out of it though I cried aloud.

Wealth—‘ Like one’s family with children, etc. which does not make happy him who is beset with the highest of dangers, wealth, which only makes hosts of thoughts to whirl in the brains of men, does not confer bliss. Just as a king allies himself with any person who owns his supremacy, no matter whether that person be noble-minded or base, so wealth which is attained by any person who flies to it for refuge tends, however serviceable it may be, to the condemnation of the spiritually wise, and hence is base. Who is there in this world whose mind does not thaw like ice at the sight of wealth or whirl in the maelstrom of wealth, which embitters the happiness arising from the quintessence of the sweet discourse of the spiritually wise by the venom of attachment, hatred, etc. created in such worldly men by the manifold evil effects of wealth? Like a ruby which becomes blurred with a coating of dust, all persons—whether they are good to their relatives or not, whether they are intelligent or poor or warlike—succumb to this desire and are degraded. It is rare to find blameless, opulent men, truthful warriors or kings, who look equally upon all their subjects. This wealth which the mind covets and which is very ephemeral in its nature is utterly useless like a flower-bud on a creeper growing in a well and encircled by a serpent.

Life—‘ Prāṇa (Life), which is like a drop of rain-water dripping from the end of a leaf, flits out of

the body, like an idiot, at unseasonable times. It is only by being bitten by the serpent of the ever-waxing (desires of the) five senses that persons without true Jñāna begin to droop in their minds and thus shorten their lives. I do not rejoice in this life of mine which is like a flash of lightning in the cloud of delusion, regarding this my limited body as real. It is possible to cleave the all-pervading Ākāśa or restrain the stormy winds or still the waves that ever and anon arise on the surface of the water but to disappear; but by no means is it possible to resist this desire for life which should not be considered as permanent. This life is ephemeral like autumnal clouds or a gheeless lamp or ocean waves; though appearing real, it does not have the least quiescence, is steeped in boundless ignorance and is devoid of the true end of human life; if we inquire into its fruits, we find pain only is generated, like unto the pangs of delivery. That is the noblest life in which, for attaining the highest Ātmic wisdom replete with bliss and free from all pain, persons spend their days in ceaseless Ātmic enquiry, without wasting their time as do such base things as trees, beasts or birds. The lives of those who have freed themselves from rebirth are the truest and the noblest; but others' lives are like those of old asses. In the case of persons without discrimination, learning is a burden; in the case of persons without quiescence (of mind), their mind is a burden to them; but in the case of persons having passion and other stains, Ātma-jñāna is a burden. In the case

of persons who have not enjoyed the bliss in their own Self, a beautiful body, life, Manas, Buddhi, Ahaṃkāra, actions, etc. are intolerable burdens like those of a carrier. Life, after associating itself with this body, departs out of it even while young, like the wise who shun association with the wicked. There is nothing so baneful as this life which is perishable in its nature and fickle in the bestowal of pleasures.

Ahaṃkāra—‘I am terrified by the enemy, which is the illusory and harmful Ahaṃkāra (I-am-ness or egoism) which is generated through delusion and permeates me throughout. It is only through Ahaṃkāra that all the mental cares, dangers and the ever-increasing actions of life arise. There is no enemy greater than it. Having associated with this enemy of mine for a long time, I am now in an agitated state of mind. I do not taste food or water. Why need I speak about (other) enjoyments? All our daily ceremonies, *yajña*-s (sacrifices), the enjoyable things, associated as they are with Ahaṃkāra, are unreal. Therefore the real secret lies only in the renunciation of this Ahaṃkāra. So long as this Ahaṃkāra clouds us, so long will the flowers of desire bloom and increase in us. Though I have given up all Karman-s (actions) in order to free myself from Ahaṃkāra, yet my pain has not ceased, since I have not cognized my own Self. Mayest thou, Oh Ṛṣi, be pleased to bless me in order that I may liberate myself from this cursed Ahaṃkāra which is the source of all dangers in this world, is evanescent, has its seat in the mind, and is

idiotic in its nature and without due discrimination and intelligence.

Manas—‘Then my Manas (mind) is tossed about towards objects of love and hatred, etc. like a light feather in a stormy wind. It ever flies far and wide in vain for sensual objects, away from the association of the wise, like a wandering city dog; but no results accrue therefrom. Like a wicker-basket (*karaṇḍaka*) which is not able to hold water, this baneful mind does not hold the joy (or enjoy the happiness) within, but whirls at the sight of much-coveted, immense wealth. This ferocious dog of a mind, following the mate of desire, ever preys upon poor ignorant me as upon a carcass. Just as a straw is tossed to and fro in the air by a whirlwind; this mind of mine subjects me to all kinds of delusions and pain and tempts me far into the great void. This terrible mind which appears to be of the nature of the causeless *Māyā*, but which is otherwise, as a result of right inquiry, leads me into many worldly actions like a lad obsessed. It flits in a moment from earth to *Pātāla* (lower world) and thence back again to earth. This deceptive mind in seeming to lift me up to higher states hurls me to still lower ones, like a decayed rope that is used in lifting wood out of a well. This monster of a venomous mind is more terrible than fire itself, more insurmountable than mountains and more obdurate than a huge diamond.

‘It is possible to drink up the contents of the ocean, eradicate (the mountain) *Mahāmeru* to its root

or swallow flaming fire; but it is impossible to control this mind of ours. It is the one cause of the generation of all objects. This perishable universe exists only when the mind exists but disappears with the absence of the latter. Therefore the mind should be annihilated. All the host of pains and pleasures which are like mountain fastnesses arise through the mind only. Hence I conclude they will perish, should the mind perish through discrimination.

Desire—‘The pack of owls called passion and anger play in the Ākāśa of Ātman during the night of restless desires enveloped by the intense gloom of dire delusion. All my much longed-for, virtuous actions are entirely gnawed away by my desires like a fiddle-string by a rat. Being without a mind which has Ātma-jñāna, I am enmeshed by them, like a bird caught in a trap, and droop thereby. The fire of desire has scalded me. In my present state, I do not think that even a bath in ambrosia would cool me. Like the intense darkness of the newmoon day, they make the most undaunted of persons quail with fear, daze the eye of intelligence and create tremors even in the hearts of the wise, who have sweet patience. This old harlot, desire, of the nature of the ominous owl, ever follows persons in the hope of inciting them to earn wealth but in vain. Like a dancing woman who, though enfeebled by age, dances in vain without true joy, all my desires (play in me in a similar manner and) afflict me. They try to encompass things beyond their reach; but even if such things are within their grasp,

they pass over them and again long for happiness (in other things). Like monkeys, they roam about without any fixed seat. Like bees that rejoice, flying from one flower to another in a garden, they traverse in a moment Pātāla, Ākāśa and all the eight quarters of the world. It is these ever-waxing desires that bring on the pain of rebirth, the heaviest of all pain. The Deva-s (celestials) extol disinclination of the mind (towards objects) as the greatest panacea for the disease of desires which afflicts even those living in palatial mansions guarded by forts. It is desire that makes the deep inner man manifest itself externally, like radiant damsels wearing golden bracelets, or the rays of the sun which make the lotus bud blossom forth (and appear externally). These desires of the mind, which are like a diamond point or a sharp-pointed sword or like the sparks of iron emitted out of fire, in one moment reduce to nothing men as great as Mahāmeru, or handsome, wise men or the courageous, or warriors or any others.

‘This body which is composed of the intestines, muscles, etc. and is subject to change, being at one time fat and at another time lean, comes into being in this mundane existence simply to undergo pain. What thing more palpably fruitless, pain-giving and degraded could be conceived of than this body which oscillates with pain or pleasure through the increase or decrease of the experience of objects? Of what avail is this body—whether eternal or otherwise, liable to pain and pleasure—a house which is tenanted by Ahaṁkāra, the

householder with the ten mischievous cows, the Indriya-s (the organs), the servant Manas (mind), producing Saṃkalpa, and his partner, desire, with the portals of the mount adorned by a festoon of many teeth, and the monkey which is the tongue? If this body which is the medium of enjoyment of wealth, kingdom, actions, etc. exists always, then no doubt it is something that should be longed for; but all these will vanish with the advent of Yama (death) at the appointed time. What beauty is there to be enjoyed in this body which is composed of blood and flesh, has the tendency to rot, is the same for the rich as well as the poor and, being without discrimination, is subject to growth and decay. Only he who relies with certainty upon a lightning flash or an autumnal cloud or a vast Gandharva (illusory) city will cling to this body as real.

Infancy—‘Whatever (person) you are born as, in this ocean of Saṃsāra (mundane existence) rolling with the many waves of diversified actions in a restless and fluctuating state, the period of infancy is the cause of intense pain. This period is attended by unavoidable dangers, weaknesses, inability to convey ideas, ignorance, desires and instability of thought. And in this body it is that the mind functions and outdoes, in its fluctuation, the ocean waves or a damsel’s eyes or the flames of a fire or a lightning flash. The infant feeds itself on dirt like a roving dog and rejoices or weeps at trifles. Sometimes it eats the dust and invites the moon in the sky to come near it. Does all this ignorance constitute bliss? This mischievous

period of infancy which creates terror in the hearts of one's master, parents, relatives, elders, etc. is the source of perpetual fear and a nest replete with many stains. The bawd of non-discrimination finds a safe asylum in it. During this period none enjoys happiness.

Youth—‘ Having crossed this period beset with many dangers, one reaches the period of youth, liable to another kind of pain, and then reels and droops under the heavy blows dealt by the devil called Man-matha (the god of love) who lives (latent) in the hollows of his mind. His noble intelligence, though broadened in its views through a study of all departments of knowledge, though illumined through the service of the Guru, and purified through good Karman-s will yet be defiled like a muddy stream. Out of the heated desert which is the body arises the mirage which is youth, seeking which the deer of mind falls giddily into the pit of sensual objects. Pain increases so long as there are the pleasures of youth to be enjoyed. Similarly, desires increase mightily till youth ends, and work manifold mischief. He only is a man who has acquired (while young) the power to attain salvation easily, overcoming all the obstacles of youth. Such a person is fit to be worshipped by all, is truly wise and is one who has known his true state. Is there to be found, in this universe, the period of youth (in the lives of any) adorned with such inestimable qualities as grace, humility, etc. and fit to be the safe asylum (of persons)? We may as well look for a spacious forest in the sky above.

Lust—‘What happiness is there to be derived from the string-tossed puppets which are female bodies, composed of joints, muscles, bones and flesh? Oh, how can there arise fine desires for women with soft tendrils of hair, if we once dissect (or analyse) with our minds their eyes and other parts of the body into their components of skin, flesh, blood and tears, etc. The breasts of females adorned with pearl-garlands and other ornaments, like unto the waters of the Gaṅgā with its long waves flowing down from the great Meru heights, are preyed upon (or enjoyed) by men like packs of dogs licking balls of cooked rice strewn in the crematoriums in the suburbs of a town. Which person is there in this world who will not be burnt like straw when exposed to the flames of females proceeding from the (fire of) sin and having darkness in the shape of sable locks, scalding men with their eyes? The cool body of females (which one enjoys) serves as the dry fuel with which to burn one in hell. Dames with dark eyes are like traps set by Kāma (the god of desire) to ensnare the ignorant minds of men. They resemble also the bait of flesh strung in the angling hook of excruciating torments in order to lure the fish which are men in the pool of rebirth replete with the mud of the dire mind. Oh, I will never long for the pleasure of women who are like caskets locking up within them infinite misery and enclosing the gems which are endless desire, hatred, etc. If we begin to analyse this body into flesh, blood, bones, muscles, etc. then our desire for women, said to shine with

the moon's resplendence, will become distasteful in a short time. Only he who has a spouse (and tastes the conjugal pleasures) lusts after such enjoyment; otherwise how can he feel the pleasures of conjugal life? If the lust for women which is the source of all enjoyment ceases, then worldly bondage which has its substratum in the mind will cease. With the cessation of the (conception of this) universe which exists only in name, there dawns the eternal, divine bliss. The lust for women which, being without discrimination, is enchanting at a distance, grows always, even if gratified, and flutters like the wings of a honey-bee and is hard to give up. Being afraid of the terrible consequences it brings, such as diseases, death, dotage and mental and other pain, I do not long after it now. Without its renunciation, how can I expect to attain the Brāhmic state?

Dotage—‘The stage of infancy is succeeded by the stage of youth; the latter is, in its turn, devoured by that of old age with its great changes. If dotage sets in, accompanied as it is by delusion, disease, pain, etc. then one's ripe intelligence bids adieu, like the affection of a husband towards his first wife after marrying a second one. With dotage, there ensues manifold pain, such as decline of this body of the nine gates, forgetfulness, inability to gratify desire or perform the requisite actions, dire diseases, complete helplessness in obtaining things required and the scorn heaped by sons, etc. Friends, issues, relatives, servants, etc. laugh at the poor man who is

quivering with old age. Like owls resting in the hollows of a tree, his desires remain in his uncouth form, full of pain and devoid of strength and good qualities. In old age, beset with frailties and imbecility, when dangers, with desires as their hand-maids, burn one's heart, all kinds of imaginary fears arise as man is unable to cope with the desires which arise involuntarily in him and to contemplate the beneficial nature of existence in the higher world. Thirst for joy in material objects increases with old age; but the person is powerless to gratify that thirst. Being unable to enjoy them, he is dejected. Death lays its hand on grey heads which are like ripe pumpkins of the genus that become grey at their proper time. It is before the king called Death that the armies of mental and physical diseases march in procession in this world, having the insignia of the Cāmara¹ called greyness. In the tabernacle of this body, white-washed by greyness, there live the dames called dangers, an imbecile mind and diseases that make one droop. What bliss can we expect to derive from association with this old grey hag of dire dotage? It is very difficult to do away with the desires of old age by getting rid of the three kinds of desire (for son, wife and wealth).

Kāla—‘All the pleasurable objects of enjoyment in this world, arising through Ajñāna in the series of rebirths, take leave with the arrival of Yama (death or time), like a thread nibbled by a rat. There is nothing

¹ Cāmara—Chowries or the Yak tails used as regal symbols.

in this world which is not devoured by Kāla (time), like Vāḍavāgni (the deluge fire) quenching the ocean waters abounding in crocodiles, fishes, etc. Even in the case of the ineffable, Great Ones, he does not wait a minute beyond the allotted time. Having swallowed up everything, he would be all himself. Even divine kings, the beneficent Brahmā, Asura Vṛtra,¹ mighty as Mahāmeru and others come under his clutches like a serpent under an eagle's grip. He easily destorys all things, whether they be tendrils or leaves, a straw or Mahāmeru, the ocean waters or the lofty Mahendra mountains and wields them according to his will. He creates in the morning this forest which is the universe with the Aśvattha (fig) tree, on which grow the fruits (the mundane eggs) buzzing with myriads of flies (egos), and having seen them ripen at noon through his eyes which are the sun, plucks them when grown into the guardians of the quarters, and eats them up (at night). He also strings in the rope of three² *guṇa-s* even gems in the form of the highest men of the universe, and makes them his prey. In the dilapidated dwelling which is this small universe, he collects like rubies, in the casket of Death, all worldly men scattered everywhere. Having hunted the egos in the form of beasts, birds, etc. in the great forest of this essenceless universe, he, at last, during the Mahākalpa, sports in the tank comprised of the great ocean, filled with the lotus which is the shining Vāḍava

¹ Asura Vṛtra—the enemy of Indra.

² The three ingredients of Prakṛti or matter.

fire. This personage Time has, in the repast made of the diverse created worlds, all living creatures as his dainties with the six tastes such as bitterness, etc. and the incomparable seven seas of milk, clarified butter, etc. as his beverage; he moves in cycles round and round among the objects created at every Mahākalpa.

Destructive Śakti—‘ This invulnerable and destructive Śakti (potency of Brahman) does away with the universe with all its moving and fixed objects and reigns triumphant like a tigress in the forest of delusion along with her attendants, the goddess Durgā and others. Having put an end to all living beings and the universe, she holds up in her hand a honeyed vessel, which is this earth, and wears on her breast the three Loka-s (worlds) like a garland composed of the three lotuses, blue, red and white.¹ In her arm, she carries, as if it were, a sportive parrot in a cage, a man-lion thundering with the sound of a thunder-cloud. On her body, stainless and still as the autumnal sky, she has the great Time, sportively, as it were a young cuckoo, and has a sweet voice like that of the melodious flute. Her victorious bow is the non-existence of all and her arrows, the created pains. Thus (at the time of Pralaya or dissolution) she dances and sports everywhere at her sweet will and pleasure with great radiance. She wears on her head Svarga as her head ornament and on her feet, Pātāla, the many hells strung as her leg ornaments. The sun

¹ The three attributes of Prakṛti or matter.

and the moon are her ear ornaments, the Himālaya-s, her bones, and Mahāmeru, her golden ornament and the Cakravāla mountain, her girdle. Sometimes she rides on the peacock-vehicle of Subrahmaṇya (the son of Śiva), inclining backwards and moving to and fro. Sometimes she assumes the head of the Rudra-s, having three eyes and the terrible moon on their head. Sometimes she wears (on her person) as a Chowrie the beautiful locks of the goddess Parameśvarī or the writhing, headless, living trunks of the mighty and terrible Bhairava-s;¹ or she carries as an alms-bowl the body of Devendra shining with a thousand eyes. Wearing (on her neck) the garland of skulls, strung together by the bodily muscles, she annihilates all the worlds in a manner terrifying even to herself and stays in the one, shining Ākāśa. It is this terrible woman that at the time of the great Pralaya dances with joy with garlands on her breast composed of lotuses, namely the round heads of the all-pervading Viṣṇu.

‘All the objects heretofore described by me are not real. This dire mind arises only through Ahaṁkāra. All visible objects are dead to me. I am not able to know the end (and aim) of these births. Therefore my mind falters and is afflicted by mental cares. The disease of desire preponderates in all. It is rare to find high-souled men who are free from the thick mist of desires. This, my youth, which is well fitted

¹ One of the manifestations of Śiva.

for the acquisition of the higher spiritual ends is now vainly spent in fruitless endeavours.

Association with the Wise—‘True love for great personages is at a great discount and hence the path of Mokṣa (salvation) is not known. Hence it is that it is rare to attain Ātma-tattva. As the impure mind (of man) has not the benevolence to consider another’s happiness as its own, it is ever troubled. Again, as this mind has not the complacency to rejoice at another’s virtue, there is no internal contentment. As it does not consider the pain of others as its own, compassion does not arise in it. Again if it is not indifferent to the vicious actions of others, baseness (of mind), however distant, will overtake it. And then cowardice will take the place of courage; else persons degraded into hell will again return to Svarga. It is very easy to contract an association with the ignorant, but it is very hard to do so with the truly illumined.

‘All thoughts of objects, which appear but to perish, produce only bondage. All the hosts of egos which are the result of their Vāsanā-s separate themselves (from their bodies) and go to heaven or hell. All the quarters will cease to exist in the absence of the sun which differentiates them. All countries visited get new appellations and change with time. The grandest mountains are scattered to dust. When Sat (the Reality) alone prevails (at the time of dissolution), the three worlds of Bhū, Antarikṣa and Deva (or Svarga) perish, the oceans become parched, stars are

pulverized and scattered in space and the hosts of Deva-s and Asura-s disappear. Then Siddha-s¹ will be annihilated; Dhruva (the pole star) will die; the Trinity (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) will be absorbed in the Supreme Reality; Time, the power of Īśvara, who through his Saṃkalpa produces creation, etc. along with its law of ordination, comes to an end; the all-full Ākāśa perishes; and even the ancient, visible macrocosm becomes merged in the non-dual Parameśvara (the Supreme Lord) who is the liberator from the delusion of Māyā, the one Reality above the reach of speech and mind and the one Jñāna completely devoid of stains.

‘People in this world die, ever being engaged in such frivolous thoughts as the following: “This time is an auspicious one, this is the spring season (for doing work). What is the best time favourable for pilgrimage? Relatives only grace an occasion. I cannot hereafter attain the like of the enjoyment I had at such and such a time.” If after resolving within themselves to act according to the lives of the great Wise Ones, they do not utilize the day for this purpose, how can they expect to have sound sleep at night? Having centered all their affections upon wife, children and wealth, as if they were nectar, and having identified themselves with them, they ever accumulate wealth. But if those much longed-for things disappear through some mishap, their sorrow knows no bounds. Having

¹ Those persons who have developed psychical powers such as Aṇiman, etc.

vanquished all enemies, some men come into the safe possession of immense wealth without any rivals; but lo! Yama glides in from some covert place and puts an end to all their fond, cherished hopes. The illusions called wife, sons, etc. are like wayfarers who meet together in the course of a journey. Even Brahmā-s die in a Kalpa which is but a moment of time (compared to eternity). It is absurd on the part of our mind with its very limited perception of time to attempt to know anything about the extreme smallness or greatness of time. All men are subject to diverse kinds of pain. The really learned are very few in number. The manifold Karman-s of the different castes or orders of life generate pain and are illusory. How then am I to live (amidst such pain)? Let me walk on that path on which I shall be freed from all actions involving me in auspicious days, great wealth, etc. and become of the nature of thought itself. All things generating pain in this world such as dangers, wealth, birth and death perish in the instant of time stated in our books of computation. A brave warrior dies at the hands of a coward and a hundred persons die by one man's hand. How men of cringing spirit exalt themselves to the status of lords! Thus is the wheel of time gyrating without any limit.

‘Therefore, in my mind, severely scalded by the forest fire of these earthly stains, there will no more arise the ever-increasing desire for wealth, like the delusion of a mirage in a desert. I do not long for a life of royal pleasures nor for death which is inevitable. Therefore

I would rather be as I am now, without any pain to suffer. But there is the despondency in my mind harrowing me, from which I have to free myself. And if you, through your well-trained mind, cannot remove it now, when else will it be done? Even the most virulent of poisons is no poison to me; but sensual objects are truly so. The former defiles the body only, whereas the latter soil many bodies in successive rebirths.

‘Pleasure, pain, relatives, friends, life, death, etc. in no way enthrall the mind of the (emancipated) wise. To them, this passing life is like water drops sprinkled by the wind and sensual enjoyments are like a lightning flash. Also, the period of youth which is conducive to men’s salvation (if properly utilized) is only ephemeral. Having reflected well upon these things, quiescent sages like you are ever engaged in deep Samādhi (deep meditation). The proclivities of my discriminative mind are also towards the identification of myself with Kūṭastha (Brahman); but like a lady separated from her dear lord, my mind neither attains the certainty of Brahman nor inclines towards material desires. Therefore, in this dilemma of mine, please point out to me that ever resplendent and eternal state, devoid of pain, frailties, Upādhi-s (or vehicles of matter), doubt and delusion. What is that eternal state, unapproached by sorrow, where I shall remain unscathed by the fire of sensual objects, though moving amidst them, like a ball of mercury exposed to fire? Like the ocean which is nothing else but its waters,

Samsāra (mundane existence) rests on words only, proceeding from the power of speech. How did the righteous Great Ones manage to avoid the pain of this world? Please be gracious enough to impart to me that certainty of yours. Does not this supreme state exist? Is there not this state (*sthiti*) of quiescence? If so, will not anyone unlock to me the real mysteries? Otherwise, I shall not, through my efforts alone, be able to attain the quiescent state. For being devoid of doubt and Ahaṁkāra, I shall not perform any duties. Neither food nor sweet water nor fine clothes will I long for. I shall not perform the daily ceremonies of bathing, giving, etc. My mind will not incline towards wielding the regal sceptre or towards pleasure or pain. Without love or hatred, I shall only remain silent and desireless, statue-like.

Thus did Rāma, with a face like the stainless, cool, full moon, a sweet accent and a mind now full blown through Ātmic discrimination, deliver himself before the assembly of joyful Muni-s and then remain silent like a peacock ceasing to cry while facing the dark thunder clouds.

1. THE STORY OF ŚUKA

Summary—In this chapter, Viśvāmitra relates a story to Rāma to impress upon him (who was convinced of the unreality of the universe and the ego, as is evident

from the foregoing chapter) the truth that he alone is the One Consciusness (Reality).

Hearing these wondrous words of Rāma, the heir apparent, which would relieve one from the great Saṃsāra, all those assembled in the council hall of Daśaratha were exhilarated with joy, their hairs standing on end, as if they came there expressly to hear Rāma's words. Even the effulgent hests of Siddha-s exulted in the Ākāśa above. After expressions of approbation of Rāma's words, and copious showers of flowers (namely contentment) had filled the hall for about twelve minutes, the Siddha-s, who had been roving in the Ākāśa for about a Kalpa in extreme pain, said to themselves: 'We who were labouring under delusion till now are fortunate in having drunk today the sweet nectar of Rāma's words and thereby purified our mind of all stains. We shall benefit from what the Muni-s say and attain the Supreme Principle.' So saying, they descended from the Ākāśa to Daśaratha's assembly on earth, and all in the hall rose up and advanced to meet them. First and foremost did Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra pay respects to them, who returned the same to both. Then king Daśaratha was offered respect by the Siddha-s through kind expressions, on his saluting them. Then showering flowers and kind words on Rāma who was before them, they exclaimed: 'Oh Muni-s, the recent utterances of Rāma, expressing benevolence and other qualities, are passing strange and noble in their nature. It is indeed difficult to derive happiness in this most injurious

Saṃsāra which, though created full of pleasures by Deva-s, is fraught with pain? True, if Rāma with supreme indifference towards objects had longed after Saṃsāra, we may be justified in doing so; but inasmuch as we long for things hated by Rāma, we Siddha-s as well as Devarṣi-s, etc. should be classed as ignorant.'

Viśvāmitra, looking at Rāma with great love, said: 'Thou hast cognized all through thyself, through thy bright intelligence. There is nothing more for thee to understand clearly. Thou and Muni Śuka, replete with spiritual wisdom, are on a par with one another. Even those who have acquired the matchless spiritual wisdom endeavour to attain the quiescent state.'

At this Rāma questioned him thus: 'Please, Oh father, enlighten me as to how Śuka Muni, though possessing intelligence devoid of Ahaṃkāra, had no quiescence of mind at first, and how he came into possession of that bliss afterwards.'

The Muni replied: Brahmarṣi¹ Śuka, who was replete with Jñāna (spiritual wisdom), which, if developed, puts an end to a series of seven rebirths at

¹ There were three classes of Ṛṣi-s in India, who were the earliest Adepts known; the Royal or Rājārṣi-s, kings and princes (like Viśvāmitra and others) who adopted the ascetic life; the Divine or Devarṣi-s, the sons of Dharma or Yoga (like Nārada and others); and the Brahmarṣi-s, the descendants of those Ṛṣi-s who were the founders of Gotra-s of Brāhmaṇa-s or of caste races (like Bharadvāja, Vasiṣṭha and others). *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. IV (5th Adyar ed.), p. 70.

To this the king replied: 'Though thou hast known everything definitely, still thou hast asked me in spite of thy father's words. The state described (by us) is the real one. Ātman alone *is*, pervading as the all-full Cidākāśa everywhere. Nought else is but That. That Jñāna is bound by its own Saṃkalpa.¹ With the liberation from that Saṃkalpa, there is freedom from the trammels of bondage. As thou hast now clearly cognized that Ātma-jñāna, thou hast abandoned all longing for enjoyment and the sight of the visible. Thou hast, through thy all-full mind and without pain, attained all that could be attained, namely Brahman itself. Thou hast mingled with that secondless Principle which is beyond the reach of all vision. Thou hast become a Jīvan-mukta.² But there is one thing which thou hast yet to do, namely to give up the delusion of Māyā which has arisen in thy mind (the giving up of which will entirely free thee and not bar thy further progress).'

When the king of kings named Janaka thus initiated Śuka into the Ātmic mysteries³ (through his

¹ It is will in its highest sense and thought in its lowest sense.

² A Jīvan-mukta is one who is emancipated while in the body, while a Videha-mukta is one who is emancipated after discarding the body.

³ He who attains unto Ātman, having overcome Māyā, illusion, will alone know what Māyā is and how it arises and is destroyed. And this knowledge of Ātman is an occult mystery which is the subject of initiation by a Guru. Hence it is that we find that no words can describe the origin of Māyā, etc. As Śuka

direct presence), the stainless Rṣi attained quiescence in his Ātman or Higher Self, being freed from the pangs of birth and the agonies of death; then all his questioning, perplexities of mind and doubts vanished through (direct) self-cognition. Then, having reached the highest pinnacle of Mahāmeru, he went into the non-fluctuating Nirvikalpa Samādhi and after a period of a thousand solar years merged into the Jñānākāśa,¹ like a light which, when divested of its wick and ghee, returns to its fount of Ākāśic Agni (fire). Like waterdrops becoming one with the ocean of waves, he, being cleansed of the stains of contemplation (or thinking), merged into the secondless Brahman, the vibration that started in himself (as the 'I') having melted away. Thus did he attain quiescence (of mind), free from the delusion of Māyā.

This is exactly the path thou shouldst follow, Oh Rāma. The characteristic of a mind that has known all that should be known is non-identification with the ever pleasurable worldly enjoyments. By the proclivities of the mind towards material objects, bondage to objects becomes strengthened; otherwise, the bondage becomes slackened and in course of time ceases. Oh Rāma, the extinction of Vāsanā-s alone is Mokṣa (liberation); the fixation of the mind in material objects through Vāsanā-s

was a fit disciple, he was made to have an Aparokṣa or direct perception of the same by Janaka.

¹ Jñāna stands here for Brahman or Ātman. It is stated to be Jñānākāśa, as Ākāśa is all-pervading.

is bondage. Those persons are Jivan-mukta-s who have conquered the Vāsanā-s and are indifferent to the many worldly enjoyments without the aid of Tapas (religious austerities), Vrata-s (religious observances), etc. That one Principle which Rāma's mind has cognized through the utterances of the Great Ones is the one Reality and nought else. The only person able to relieve the great soul of Rāma from all doubts and render his mind quiescent is the omniscient Vasiṣṭha who knows clearly the three periods of time, is the Guru of men in this world and is a witness to all things having name, form, etc. So said Viśvāmitra in the king's assembly.

Having spoken these words, Viśvāmitra looked at Vasiṣṭha's face and reminded him that Rāma should be taught those Jñāna stories with which Brahmā residing in the lotus had been pleased to favour them, in order to put an end to the dissensions¹ between them and liberate the virtuous from their Saṃcita Karman² and lead them to Mokṣa. Initiation into the mysteries of Brahman will fructify only in that disciple's mind which is desireless and will produce Jñāna (spiritual wisdom) in it. This is what the Śāstra-s (scriptures) say. And herein lies the glory (of the higher spirituality). But initiation imparted to a vicious

¹The dissensions between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are related at great length in the *Mahābhārata*.

²The accumulated Karman-s which are yet in store, to be experienced in future births.

disciple, full of desires, will become defiled like pure milk deposited in a container made of dog's skin.

Thus did Viśvāmitra expatiate in various ways, when the unsullied Nārada, Vedavyāsa and other Muni-s assembled there, who heard Viśvāmitra's words, eulogized him for his noble utterances. Thereupon Muni Vasiṣṭha, son of Brahmā and equal to him, addressed Viśvāmitra thus: 'Oh Muni, well versed in all departments of knowledge, I will do thy bidding. Who ever would go against the words of the Great Ones who have known really who "the knower" is? I will now recite the pure Jñāna stories meant for those with non-fluctuating and pure mind and related by the lotus-residing Brahmā on the Niṣadha hills in order to liberate them from the cycles of rebirth.'

Therefore Vasiṣṭha with a concentrated and pure mind related the following to make Ajñāna (ignorance) perish and the supreme state of all-full Jñāna dawn in men's minds.

II. MUMUKṢU PRAKARAṆA

Summary—Of the fourfold qualifications required of a neophyte on the Path, the last one, namely the longing after emancipation is treated in this chapter.

Vasiṣṭha said: Now, Oh Rāma, hearken to what I am going to say. Through right endeavours in this life (of the world), all the ends of human aspiration can be achieved by following strictly the Śāstraic (or scientific) injunctions. Such endeavours are twofold: one in the direction of Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s (the sciences relating to divine wisdom) and the other in the direction of (ordinary) Śāstra-s (treating of terrestrial wisdom). The former leads to Mokṣa and the latter which is not the true Śāstraic path leads to bondage. Those virtuous persons only will gain Mokṣa who, from their early boyhood, train themselves in the Ātma-jñāna (spiritual) lore, associate themselves with unflinching, great men and develop benevolence and other good qualities.

At which Rāghava exclaimed: ‘Being under the control of Vāsanā-s generated by me in my former births, I have not been making efforts in the direction of the right path. Oh Guru, what then am I to do?’

On Vāsanā-s, pure and impure—To this Vasiṣṭha replied: Oh Rāma of marvellous qualities, it is through one’s efforts alone and nothing else that the Brāhmic

state can be attained. The hosts of Vāsanā-s may be divided under two heads, namely the pure and the impure. Should the pure ones cling to him, he will easily attain the immaculate Brāhmic state through them; but in the case of the impure Vāsanā-s, pain will be generated. Thou shouldst, Oh Rāma, through dint of painful efforts, avoid these impure ones. Through the two ordained paths of good and evil, the current of Vāsanā-s swells enormously. Mayest thou, after straining all thy nerves in the cultivation of Brahmanidyā (Brāhmic science), liberate thyself from the impure Vāsanā-s and rest firmly in the (pure) Vāsanā-s appertaining to the beneficent Reality. Thou shouldst, through thy equal vision over all and thy own efforts, check the mind from subjection to the impure Vāsanā-s and make it associate with the pure ones. If after annihilating the many impure ones which are the products of many previous births, thou shouldst make the pure ones dawn now, then they will conduce to thy (future) efforts. Even should doubt arise in thy mind as to where the pure ones will lead thee, thou shouldst cultivate them only, as any excess therein is not, in any way, injurious. Till thy mind is illumined by the Reality of Brahman, thou shouldst always follow the path of initiation into Brahman shown by the Guru-s through the sacred sentences of the Veda-s.

Mayest thou, Oh Rāma, remain immutably fixed in that state of direct cognition, after purging thy mind of its impure Vāsanā-s and making it, through the pure

ones, attain the Ātmic state, free of all stains and pains. Destroy thy illusory thoughts, so that they may not resurrect again. Develop extreme quiescence of mind and bliss within thyself. And then through thy intelligence, freed from the longing after objects, thou shouldst, Oh Rāma, merge thyself with Brahman, engaged in the investigation of the significance of the holy sentence, *tat tvam asi* (Thou art That) and meditate upon such identity. Now listen to the utterances of Brahmā seated on the honey-dropping lotus flower.

Vasiṣṭha's own history—When Rāghava inquired of Vasiṣṭha the cause of such utterances, Vasiṣṭha went on thus: Out of Cidākāśa¹ which is the endless, the all-pervading, the seat of all and the illuminator of all objects, there arose Viṣṇu. Brahmā arose out of the lotus of his heart and evolved, as the many creations of his mind, this earth and other diverse objects. Then the author of the universe, Lord Brahmā, (in the course of its progress) found the many noble souls in Bhārata-varṣa (portion of earth including India) writhing under extreme pain and was moved to pity, like a loving father towards his afflicted son. Contemplating the salvation of these afflicted ones, he came to the conclusion that the cycle of births and deaths cannot be arrested by either Japa-s (uttering of Mantra-s), or Tapas (religious austerities) macerating the body, or the many kinds of gifts, or bathing in such holy

¹ There are three states of Ākāśa or planes of matter as mentioned in this work, of which Cidākāśa or Jñānākāśa is the third.

waters as the Gaṅgā, etc. or any other means except through Ātma-jñāna. Therefore, with his mind, he created us all, like himself, with a bowl and a rosary of beads in the hand. So was I born, and having saluted him, I was shown a seat on a petal on the northern side of the lotus in which he was gloriously seated. There he pronounced a curse on my mind that it should be enveloped by Māyā for one Muhūrta (forty-eight minutes). Thereupon my mind became stupefied and I began to play the woman, like an illiterate and ignorant person devoid of all spiritual wisdom. Observing me thus, Brahmā questioned me as to the cause of my sorrow. Then I asked him how this Saṃsāra arose and how Mokṣa can be attained after freedom from existence. Upon which he blessed me with the true cognition of the higher state. As a result, I was in a non-fluctuating state, owing to my cognition of Jñānātman Reality. Upon which Brahmā remarked to me: 'It was we that enveloped thy intelligence with the base Māyā and then cleansed it of Māyā after having annihilated the latter. We have ordained that all souls shall be initiated by thee and attain Mokṣa. After the dawning of full Jñāna, thou shalt soon go to Bhārata-varṣa in Jambūdvīpa which is the land of all perishable Karman-s (religious works). There shalt thou initiate men, having the four qualifications (for attaining liberation), into Ātma-jñāna; but thou shalt initiate lovers of (ritualistic) Karman-s, in whom egoism has not vanished, into the due performance of such Karman-s.'

According to his mandates, I shall live in Bhārata-varṣa so long as humanity exists there. I have no longing for any objects in this world. I shall ever be in the Suṣupti (dreamless, sleeping) state and thus able to transcend the limits of the mind, though engaged in the daily actions of the world. No actions of mine identify themselves with my Self. Oh valorous Rāma, those intelligent disciples alone will be knowers of Ātman who, after thoroughly discriminating between a Guru full of Jñāna and another, of Ajñāna, find an asylum in a supreme, immaculate Guru. Those only who understand the teachings of their Guru-s (in all their aspects) by an instantaneous apprehension of what the Guru-s mean will see them realized (afterwards) as in an objective vision. The stainless Guru will never initiate into Tattva-jñāna those who are weak-willed and addicted to sensual desires.

The four means of Mokṣa—If the four sentinels that wait at the gates of Mokṣa (liberation), namely Śānti (sweet patience or quiescence of mind), Vicāra (Ātmic enquiry), Saṃtoṣa (contentment of mind) and Sādhū-saṅga (association with the wise) be befriended, then, will there be any obstacle to the attainment of liberation? (No). Like the guardsmen posted at the palace gates of a king protecting the earth, who allow ingress to the visitors without to see the king within, the above four sentinels allow admittance within into Mokṣa. Even if one of them be befriended, then he will introduce the newcomer to the rest of his fellows. Therefore thou shouldst ceaselessly endeavour

to hold fast to one at least, overcoming all obstacles on the way and associate with him intimately. In order to put an end to rebirths, we should, above all, develop our (spiritual) intelligence through association with the wise, inquiry into Ātma-jñāna and Samādhi (deep meditation). The venom of Saṃsāra will be dispelled (and the man bitten will be cured of the poison) through the Garuḍa-mantra¹ called Jñāna. Then (with the development of Jñāna), even showers of arrows discharged at him will be to him like soft lily flowers; a bed of flames will resemble a softly cushioned bed fragrant with rosewater; the chopping off of his head will be like Suṣupti (the dreamless, sleeping state) wherein hapiness is enjoyed; the ripping open of his stomach will be like the application of sandal paste over his body; and the piercing of his breast by innumerable pointed lancets will be like cool water sprinkled during the long summer season. The poisonous disease of sensual objects, unfit to be associated with, can be avoided only by those who have developed the discriminative (spiritual) wisdom and not by others.

It is not through mere inquiry into Ātma-jñāna (knowledge) that Nirvāṇic bliss is attained. If one were to conduct himself in such a way as to assimilate within himself the knowledge derived from the three

¹ It is the belief in India that a person bitten by a serpent is cured by the Garuḍa-mantra, Garuḍa or the eagle being the enemy of the serpent.

sources (self-experience, the true significance of the holy sentences in the spiritual books and the instructions of a wise Guru) then the inseparable Ātmic wisdom will rise in him. The mere study of rare Jñāna books by persons of petty intelligence will but breed Ajñāna in their minds. Books treating of devotion and the performance of rituals generate less Ajñāna than the study of Jñāna books (unaccompanied by the other two mentioned above). And it should be remembered that it is far better to lead a mendicant's life by begging for food with bowl in hand at the doors even of outcastes than to pass a life of Ajñāna. Immense wealth, friends, relatives, Varanasi and other sacred places, bathing in the Gaṅgā and other waters, the hermitage of Muni-s, religious austerities afflicting the body and such things are not the sure means of reaching the higher state; it is through the mind's effort that the immaculate and supreme state can be attained.

Śānti—Now listen, Oh Rāma, to the ineffaceable characteristics of the four sentinels placed at the gate of Mokṣa. If the supreme 'sweet patience that nought can ruffle' be mastered, then all desires and sorrow will fly like darkness before the rising sun. Being confided in (and loved) like a mother, by the virtuous as well as the vicious, such persons of sweet patience are never ruffled in mind, whether they get nectar to drink and enjoy the bliss of Lakṣmī residing in the luxuriant lotus flower, or are engaged in great wars, entailing carnage, or whether they are born or dead. They never rejoice.

or grieve through the enjoyment of pleasure or pain arising from sensual objects. These pure men of sweet patience shine aloft far higher than persons of mere ripe intelligence, performers of sacrifices, men well versed in all departments of knowledge, puissant kings, virtuous men, etc. (not possessing this one attribute). Great men, having quaffed this ambrosia of sweet patience which is rarely found by intelligent men who long after it, have attained the glorious Mokṣa. Mayest thou too, Oh Rāma, act in this virtuous path.

Ātma-vicāraṇā—If along with this, thou shouldst develop fully Ātmic inquiry through thy subtle, pure intelligence, after a study of the holy Śāstra-s, then such an incomparable intelligence will reach the supreme state. It is this inquiry alone that enables one to differentiate causes from effects and constitutes the remedy for curing the disease of rebirth. Having cleared oneself of all doubts through this discriminative power which is not blurred even in the midst of the intense darkness (of ignorance), which shines with undiminished lustre even in the midst of light, and through which all things are visible, one should always be engaged, even when threatened by dangers, in the inquiry of whence am I? Whence came this universe of Saṃsāra? And of whom is this universe an attribute? Such an inquiry averts the dangerous disease called Ajñāna.

Samtoṣa—Now to noble contentment. It is the bliss arising from the experience of objects, good or

bad, without any longing or aversion, and the absence of disappointment (or indifference) shown when objects are not obtained. Should this incomparable ambrosia of contentment become permanent in one, then enjoyment of objects will become a poison. Then the mind which was immersed in sensual objects raises itself towards Ātmic wisdom and sees no more a distorted image as in a stained glass. Such a person of true contentment would be revered by great Tapasvin-s and the chief among men.

Sādhū-saṃga—To all those who wish to master this world of Māyā, association with the wise is the unfailing means. Like the Gaṅgā which confers benefits on those who bathe in its cool waters, association with the wise expands the poor intellect of men, transmutes the accidents arising out of material objects into real wealth (for progress), and converts a mind, which is miserable amidst any objects, into one which sees happiness everywhere. To such, neither sacrificial fires, nor Tapas, nor bounteous gifts nor holy waters are indispensable. One should, at any cost, long to approach those great personages replete with wisdom, who are friendly to all and release them from bondage and form the ferry to cross the ocean of rebirth.

These are the fourfold means for freedom from this oppressive Saṃsāra. Those who have embraced these four means have crossed the ocean of Saṃsāra. Oh, Rāma of sweet patience and other qualities, please listen to the stories (narrated in this book) which

will relieve thy pining mind of its delusion. Ātma-jñāna, the end of all Veda-s, will dawn of itself in one who probes into their underlying meaning without caring for their (surface) attributes or meaning. All delusions, such as love and hatred, will vanish; the mind will become as pellucid as the waters of a pool in the autumnal season. Such persons of adamant armour will never be pierced by the arrows of pain, such as poverty, etc.

The fruits of an inquiry without desire—A mind engaged in (Ātmic) inquiry will never be afflicted by the awe-inspiring Māyā and will maintain the equilibrium of a waveless ocean. All persons of deep inquiry acquire the depth of the unfathomable ocean, the stability of Mahāmeru and the coolness of the noble moon. The virtuous who tread the path of Ātmajñāna take delight only in Samādhi and other Karman-s congenial to their pursuit, like a spotless and chaste woman who contemplates her lord as God and rejoices in such thought.

The characteristics of a Jīvan-mukta—Then the above-mentioned, rare Jīvan-mukti state will gradually dawn in him who is desireless and in whose eyes there is nothing supernatural. His state is indescribable and yet he moves in the world like anybody else. His mind is not bound by any longing after Karman-s. He is indifferent to joy and pain arising from good or bad results. He preserves equilibrium in the happy enjoyment of whatever he obtains. He does not in the least concern himself with enjoyments foreign to the path of eth. wise. He is ever engaged in ceaseless

inquiry into the path of liberation, which is obtained through interrogating the wise without transgressing their words in order to enjoy bliss uninterruptedly and be oblivious of this body. Having attained Ātma-jñāna, he will not be reborn and subject himself to the pangs of delivery from a mother's womb. Those sinful men whose minds are reeling amidst sensual pleasures, being led away by them, can truly be said to be mere vermin generated out of the offal in their mother's womb. In the absence of the company of great men of supreme intelligence, one should perform those actions which are necessary to obtain food got through rightly earned and well-spent wealth. Till he finds quiescence in his stainless Ātman, and the certain (mental) quiescence of the Turya (fourth) state dawns in him, he should ever be engaged in Ātmic inquiry through a study of Ātma-jñāna books, quiescence of mind, right conduct, acuteness of intellect and association with the wise. How can this certain and stainless Turya state, arising through Ātmic inquiry, be described in words?

Turya State—A person who obtains quiescence in this Turya state, devoid of all Bhāvanā-s (thoughts), and thus crosses the ocean of Saṃsāra will attain the state of Mokṣa. Such a one will never be affected by anything, whether he is in a state of Jīva or Śiva, devoid of the Jīva state, whether he moves in a family or is a solitary recluse, whether he is bound by the delusions of Śruti-s and Smṛti-s or not, or whether he performs actions or not. He will then be in the one Reality of

Ātman as in one vast ocean without (any intercepting object such as) the Himālaya-s.

The proper path of inquiry—Thou mayest place thy credence in the words of even a child, if they are consistent with the Śruti-s, Guru's words and thy self-experience. Otherwise, thou shouldst reject as straw the utterances of even Brahmā himself. Know also that the many analogies given, in order that Brahma-jñāna may arise in thee, are for the purpose of exemplifying the One Principle. The ignorant assert that the formless and real Jñāna is subject to no analogies involving form and name (and hence should not be made the subject of inquiry); but such a mischievous argument will only be subversive of the good results of the intellectual acumen arising from Jñāna inquiry. Therefore, Oh Rāma, thou shouldst not let thy mind follow that groove of thought.

On the development of Jñāna—The sound of Ātma-jñāna will vibrate only on the strings of Śānti and other qualities. Jñāna and the above four good qualities shine in best relief only in mutual juxtaposition. Together they flourish like a tank and the lotuses growing in it. Should they be developed equally, then the result will be the attainment of Brahman; but if separately, no results will accrue. Hearing the (following) real stories (and acting up to them) will confer on one the virtues of true renunciation, imperishable wealth, eternal bliss, glorification by the wise and a happy life. Moreover, a mind illumined thereby will attain Mokṣa with immutable bliss.

III. UTPATTI PRAKARAṆA

1. THE STORY OF ĀKĀŚAJA (THE SON OF ĀKĀŚA)

Summary—Rāma, bent upon attaining liberation (having previously developed the first three means), was thus initiated into the nature of the non-dual One and into the endeavours that should be made in attaining that One, namely through the creation of pure Vāsanā-s and, for their furtherance, the development of Śānti and other qualities. Then, in order that the self-cognition of Turya-jñāna may dawn in the Prince, Vasiṣṭha continues in four Prakaraṇa-s or chapters to state that the consciousness reflected in the Līlā-saṃkalpa of Brahman which is ever of the nature of Sat, Cit and Ānanda, is alone the origin of the universe, its manifestation and its absorption and that the one Caitanya (absolute consciousness, i.e. Brahman) which contains in itself this Trinity and is its seat, is the Nṛivāṇic bliss. Thus, in order to show that all is Brahman, the author in the succeeding four Prakaraṇa-s begins with Utpatti Prakaraṇa (the chapter treating of the origin of the universe or 'I') comprising nine stories, wherein it is sought to illustrate first that all the universes, etc. are nothing but the first creations of the Saṃkalpa of the mind proceeding from, or being the cosmic ideation of, the one Caitanya.

Ātman is this universe, Jīva, etc.—In the preceding chapter, we expatiated upon the means which thou

shouldst adopt in order to attain Mokṣa. Now listen attentively as to how the several universes were evolved. Our Jīva (ego) is not other than the one Jñāna which can be directly cognized through one's self and is named with different appellations by different religionists. It enjoys the appellations of Kūṭastha,¹ the Īśvara of agency and the visible Cidābhāsa (the distorted consciousness). It is Jñāna through which the Jīva shines with the intelligence that manifests itself as Ākāśa and other objects. Like the vast waters manifesting themselves as waves, foam, etc. the above-mentioned Jīva alone shines as the earth and other objects through the heterogeneous illusions of Saṃkalpa-s (thoughts) and Vikalpa-s (fancies) which arise and disappear. The causeless Sattā-mātra (Absolute Beness), existing from before creation, manifests itself through its (inherent) Līlā (sportive power of creation) as this world composed of myriads of objects which are nought but our objective vision (or ideation), and rests in its own all-pervading Jñāna like the fluctuating power in Vāyu (air). The innumerable quarters and time, being but the diverse forms (or aspects) of the non-dual all-pervading Ātma-jñāna, is 'That' only from which they start. Know therefore, through this means, that the universe, the illusory creation of Brahman, has no other cause than 'That'.

¹ This term though applied to Paramātmān is also applied here to Jīvātman (ego).

The disappearance of the universe with Jñāna—Ātma-Caitanya alone evolves, in a moment, this universe into a visible shape. The evidences of inference, etc. are the means (through which Jñāna can be known). Belief in the reality of the diversified visible objects constitutes bondage; freedom from it constitutes Mokṣa. We shall clarify things in such a manner as to free thee from the attraction of all visible things. Please therefore hearken well to the following.

At the end of a Kalpa, when all the visible universes are annihilated like a dream in Suṣupti, there remains the incomparable Tattva-jñāna existing by itself alone, devoid of the fluctuations of thought, form, name, etc. and without the transcendent, vast darkness of Ajñāna and the light of Vṛtti¹ or mental Jñāna. This Supreme Principle is termed by the wise, for the purpose of understanding it, Satya (Truth), Brahman, Ātman, Para (the Supreme), etc.; and manifesting itself as another in a mysterious manner, it shines with the title of Jīva; it becomes, thereafter, subject to all kinds of pain. Then this Ātman which goes now by the name of Jīva, and which is the Spirit of the latter, materializes itself through the Saṃkalpa of thought into Manas (mind).

It becomes Manas—This ever-agitated Manas, having come into existence out of the ineffable Brahman, creates

¹ There are two kinds of wisdom: Vṛtti Jñāna and Svarūpa Jñāna. The former pertains to Manas, the reasoning mind, and the latter, to intuition or Buddhi.

the world according to its own Saṃkalpa. The word 'ornament' (*kaṭaka*) signifies nothing else but the gold (or other metal) of which it is composed; therefore it is needless to apply the epithet 'golden' to the word 'ornament'. Likewise the word 'universe' means Brahman and none else. The wise apply many epithets such as painful, Moha (delusion), bondage, Tamas, Mala (impurity), Avidyā, Māyā and Saṃsāra to this universe which, though arising out of the unreal mind, appears as real to it, like the waves in a transient mirage. Now if thou wilt hear from us of the nature of bondage, thou wilt understand clearly what Mokṣa is. The existence in men of differences through the conception of 'I' and 'thou' is bondage. So long as this Saṃkalpa exists, it is difficult for them to attain liberation. Liberation attained, all visible objects are merged in the seer without again manifesting themselves. In the heart of a banian seed as the cause, there exist the variegated differences of flowers, leaves, etc. Like the marvellous power of creation which preserves everything potentially in a seed and then manifests them, without in the least being injured thereby, there arises, out of the womb of the all-pervading Principle called Jñānātman, a sprout which naturally expands itself into this universe of form, name, etc. Just as the seed begins to germinate in its proper time and place, so also the seer (the knower) appears as the visible things through the Saṃkalpa of the mind—the visible things being no other than the seer itself. •

After hearing the adventures of him who rose out of Jñānākāśa, thou wilt easily understand the origin of this universe replete with Tamas. Therefore hear this story. Once upon a time, in the race of Brahman was born Ākāśaja (the son of Ākāśa), having, as his cause, the Jñānākāśa itself. He rejoiced in the possession of uninterrupted Samādhi, regard towards all creatures and of Dharma-s (virtuous actions). Having seen him live for a long period, Kāla (Time) said to himself: 'How is it that I am not able to encompass this one, when I am able to devour the whole universe as if it were a paltry trifle. My powers are such as to annihilate everything. I am led to infer that my powers have been made dull of late, like the blade of a sword in poison. Persons of determined effort never abandon their pursuits.' With these cogitations in mind, he at once marched straight to the habitation of the Brahmin (Ākāśaja) and entered his gates when he was dazzled and scorched by the intense glory of the Brahmin's spiritual fire. Undaunted, Kāla pierced through the spiritual glory and with his long, stalwart arms, 1,000 in number, seized hold of the Brahmin, but was disappointed in his efforts, as the Brahmin was too much for Kāla. As Ākāśaja was immovable like one of the forms (aspects) of Saṃkalpa (Divine Will), Kāla was unable to overpower him and so returned from that place to go to Yama¹ (God of Death) and

¹ Kāla here refers to unconditioned time, whereas Yama refers to the conditioned one in the Rūpa Loka-s putting an end to mortals, etc.

consult with him. To Yama, Kāla related all that happened between him and the Brahmin.

The advice of Yama—Yama said: ‘This universe which arose through Karman-s will perish through Karman-s only. The weapons with which we can destroy the universe are the former Karman-s. Therefore try to take hold of those Karman-s (in the life of the Brahmin) through which means you will be able to overpower him.’

Hearing those words of Yama, Kāla searched for the former Karman-s of the Brahmin in different places, such as the holy waters, tanks, the sphere of the earth, the different quarters; etc. But nowhere was he able to discern any, in spite of tedious search. At last, he returned and disclosed to the wise Yama the futility of his search. Thereupon Yama deliberated for a long time and delivered himself of the following words: ‘Born as he is out of the pure Ākāśa, this imperishable Brahmin is no other than Jñānākāśa itself. And as he has no cause, instrumental or material, he cannot be said to perform Karman-s, though performing them. There being really no cause at all, the Karman-s he performs do not really exist. The Saṃcita Karman-s (past Karman-s in latency), which will enable you to put an end to him, do not exist in his case.’ So said the fulfiller of Dharma-s (laws), namely Yama, at which the noble Kāla quietly returned to his own place in great wonderment. At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāghava said: ‘From the story related now by thee, revered one, I am led to conclude that the son of

Jñānākāśa is none other than Brahman, the self-created and non-dual one, of the nature of Vijñāna.' Thereupon the immaculate Vasiṣṭha said: We have known thus the words which passed between the havoc-producing Kāla and Yama. We shall describe still further what took place between them. When, at the end of a Manvantara, the never-idle Kāla, who had swallowed up all the universes, rose up, he tried to overpower even Brahman (as stated before). Then the lofty Yama spoke as follows to the griefless Kāla: 'Will that thought of yours fructify, which aims at destroying the incomparable Brahman that is of the nature of the stainless and matchless Brahmākāśa (or Jñānākāśa)? The indestructible Brahman shines like the above-mentioned Saṃkalpa-Puruṣa of the form of pure Ākāśa without being composed of elemental forms. It is only the self-existent Parabrahman which is Cidākāśa itself, alone and without beginning, middle or end, that manifests itself as real, as one having a body of dimensions, or an eternal Puruṣa; but it really has no form (and is unreal) like the son of a barren woman.' So said Yama to Mṛtyu (or Kāla).

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma lifted up his eyes and questioned him: 'While all souls possess two kinds of bodies, namely the lasting Ātivāhika¹ and the temporary Ādhibhautika, how comes it that Brahmā possesses the former subtle body alone?' To which, Vasiṣṭha

¹ Ātivāhika is the subtle body with which the soul lives while separated from Ādhibhautika, the physical body.

said: As all the Jīva-s have two causes, namely Brahman and the universe due to Brahmic light, they have two kinds of bodies; but as Brahmā who is not separate from Brahman has no other cause than Brahman, he has the one Ātivāhika body alone. As this universe is nothing but a mode of the mind self-evolved from Brahman, the cause of the universe, this all-pervading world is but consciousness itself. So said the Muni lovingly, when Rāma asked to be enlightened as to why this illusory universe is but a mode of the mind.

The mind creating the universe—Vasiṣṭha continued thus: The individualized mind which is full of Avidyā, formless and all-pervading, though existing in name, has no form, either externally or internally, like the Ākāśa permeating everywhere. The mere manifestation in all objects of reality is the mind. Wherever there is Saṃkalpa, there the mind exists. The form of the mind is Saṃkalpa alone. Both are identical. Such multitudinous denominations as unreality, delusion, impurity, bondage, Avidyā, Māyā, Tamas, etc. are fit synonyms of Saṃkalpa. With the annihilation of Saṃkalpa, all conception of the differences between the seer and the seen will vanish and then the Reality of Brahman will begin to shine unintercepted. Then this shadow which is the universe, movable and fixed, will be found absorbed in It in a non-dual state, though, in another sense, it cannot be said to merge with it. Then Consciousness alone will shine without any reflections. If the heterogeneous differences of objects,

arising through the conception of the mythical 'I' and 'thou', are controlled and every trace of the visible be completely destroyed beyond resurrection, then such a destruction is itself the certitude of Kaivalya (Liberation).

The time for the mind's destruction—Like a dream generating another dream in it, the mind having no visible form generates non-existent, visible things. Not resting on any object firmly, it is characterized by an excessive power of fluctuation. It fluctuates and is confused; flits away (from an object) and then returns to it; rejoices, jubilating in vain, and is intoxicated with Ahaṁkāra (egoism). But during the period of Mahāpralaya which alters the form of everything, Ākāśa, etc. will be absorbed in their highest essence and the solitary all-quiescence (of Jñāna) will remain. This is the primeval Brahman, the one Reality which is the Sun of never-setting Self-Jyotis (effulgence), limitless, unafflicted by pain (*nirāmaya*), which is the all and the evolver of all, existent in all places and times and all-pervading. Though beyond the reach of words, it is named with different illusory appellations by the wise. The most intelligent Sāṃkhya-s term it Ātman; the Vedāntin-s of pure Jñāna call it Brahman; the Vijñānin-s¹ say that it is Vijñāna; the atheists give it the pseudonym of Void; and so on. But this may be said of it, that it is the Light of the Sun's light, illumines all

¹ Those who cognize it directly.

and shines as the (abstract) Light only. From this Principle which is involved in the world and the body and yet *is not*, and which seems to talk, examine, hear, see, eat and think, a Jñāna-light arises like light from the sun. Now this (light of) consciousness pervading the Ākāśa has the Manas full of Vāsanā-s as its root, the organs as the flowers, the mundane eggs as the fruits and Māyā as the ground on which to take root. With these, It enacts its affairs in this Puryaṣṭaka¹ body, like a gem in a casket.

Ātman's Nature—Being the immaculate Jñāna, it is the all-pervading Ākāśa itself. Whatever objects it contemplates, those come into existence (at once). In that Jñāna, all the three worlds arise and are destroyed, like water in a mirage. Having evolved all objects, it is yet in its true state, unaffected, as if disconnected from them. The origin and absorption of the universe do not take place directly from and into Nirvikalpa² Ātman. In communion with that Supreme Principle, devoid of mental fancies and modifications, the great bondage of the mind will cease, all doubts will vanish, and all Karman-s will perish.

How all can enter into Brahman—Here Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha: I might rather believe that the entire Mahāmeru mountain can enter a mustard seed than that the whole of Brahman's egg merges into Brahman

¹ The Puryaṣṭaka body is the body composed of eight principles such as the organs of sense.

² Nirvikalpa Ātman—Ātman free from Vikalpa-s.

which is (said to be) the atom of atoms. Vasiṣṭha of rare Tapas replied: This doubt of thine can be removed only after a study of Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s and association with the wise for a number of months and not days. The conclusion of all Śāstra-s points to this only. Those who have taken great pains to understand clearly this abstruse account (of evolution, etc.) and go into Samādhi and who, through it, attain a direct cognition of the all-full Jñāna, will reach the supreme state of a Jīvan-mukta, devoid of this illusory universe, though existent to others; this Jīvan-mukti state is no other than the Videhā-mukti state, the progress to the latter state being a mere matter of course.

Then Rāma asked the Muni to enlighten him as to the efforts that should be made by him to tread the path laid down by the Śāstra-s to attain the Jīvan-mukti and Videha-mukti states. Vasiṣṭha replied thus: Such persons, though moving among worldly objects, do not participate in them, like the Cidākāśa, which though permeating all objects, yet appears not to be so (to our visible eyes). Such Jīvan-mukta-s are persons of transcendental nature enjoying eternal bliss. They are immaculate like Ākāśa and undefiled by attachment and other desires, though associated with their modifications. Whether performing Karman-s or not, they are not enmeshed by them, as they have no egoism. Though conforming to worldly observances, they remain unaffected by them, like utter strangers. Notwithstanding the possession of a shining mind and attention, they have not the least longing for objects.

The certitude of their conviction is of such a nature that they neither sink under any load of grief nor rejoice at any pleasure. They are in that undisturbed state of mental equilibrium in which they enjoy the Jāgrat (waking) state in Suṣupti or the Suṣupti state in Jāgrat, devoid of all Vāsanā-s. They are neither afraid, nor do they instil fear into the hearts of others in the universe. The great ones who conduct themselves thus are called Jīvan-mukta-s; they do not break away from Saṃsāra, since their minds are above worldly things.

On Videha-mukta-s—(Now about the Videha-mukti state.) Should the above-mentioned Jīvan-mukti state be attained and the body perish, then one will attain liberation in a disembodied state, like the all-permeating air in the immovable Ākāśa. Its nature is such that it is imperishable, unveiled, invisible, remote, endless and fluctuationless. It is neither 'I' nor any others nor anything else (of which we know). It is neither light, darkness, motion, evidence, Guṇa-s, nor the heterogeneous objects of the world compounded of the five elements. Mayest thou, through thy discrimination, cognize clearly and unfailingly that non-dual state which is in the midst of (or transcends) the knower, knowledge and the known, being the all-full reality, neither Rūpa (form) nor Arūpa (non-form), neither Sat (being), nor Asat (non-being), and yet one.

On being questioned by the radiant Rāma as to a clearer elucidation of Brahmic Reality replete with

Cidānanda (conscious bliss), in order that Jñāna may develop in him to the uttermost, Muni Vasiṣṭha went on thus: During the period of Mahākālpa, the cause of all (imaginable) causes, namely the Brahmic Reality shines alone. If the modifications of the mind which lean to sensual pleasures be destroyed, then Ātman divested of its Ahaṁkāra (egoism) becomes the unnameable Brahmic (or the all-pervading) Reality. The Jīvic consciousness, which does not regard (as real) the universe before it, may truly be stated to be Brahman itself. A mind which, though enjoying diverse objects, yet does not enjoy them, may be stated to be Brahman itself. That consciousness which is a witness to all thoughts of objects, the light of the Sun, etc. mind and the other visible things may be said to be Brahman itself. This Principle may be said to be the long Yoga sleep, devoid of end, dream or non-intelligence. It is 'That' from which evolve, and into which merge, the trinity of the knower, knowledge and the known. It is the immutable Jñānākāśa and not the Bhūtākāśa (composed of the elements). The internal state of self-cognition, devoid of the modifications of Manas, Buddhi and Citta¹ and being as imperturbable as a block of wood, may also be likened to that Brahmic Reality. When Brahmā, along with Viṣṇu, Rudra, Sadāśiva, Deva, Indra, Sūrya, etc. is absorbed (during Pralaya), this one Fount of Omniscience,

¹ These three are aspects of Antaḥkaraṇa, the lower mind, producing uncertainty, certitude and fluctuation respectively.

namely the Brahmic Reality, free from the base Upādhi-s (or vehicles of matter, etc.), and devoid of desires will shine alone, effulgent, stainless, all full and ever blissful.

2. THE STORY OF LĪLĀ

Summary—Having shown that it is Paramātman, the Self-consciousness, which manifests itself as Jīva, Īśvara and the universe and which is identical with them, though appearing different, the author deals in this story with the heterogeneous actions of the Manas—Māyā arising out of the one Consciousness and the means of arresting that Māyā.

The Story of Padma—Now, Oh Rāma, in order to relieve thee of this dubious predicament of thine and to bring quiescence of mind, I shall relate to thee an archaic story which thou shalt hear. There reigned upon the earth a king named Padma. He rejoiced in the possession of Sattva-guṇa and ripe discrimination. On his puissant arms rested Vijaya-Lakṣmī (the Goddess of Victory). His royal partner went by the name of Līlā and had the good qualities of strictly conforming to her husband's mind. She lived inseparable from him, like his shadow and mind.

Līlā's doings—In this state, a thought flashed across her mind to adopt some means by which

she could perpetuate the youth of her lovely lord, free him from dotage and death and so ever enjoy his company. For this purpose, she consulted Brahmins well versed in all the four Veda-s. They were unable to arrive at any means of arresting death in this world, Japa-s (utterances of Mantra-s), Tapas (religious austerities), etc. conducing to the mere development of Siddhi-s (psychic powers). Thereupon Līlā thought to herself: 'If I should predecease my lord, I shall enjoy Nirvāṇic bliss unattended by any pain. But if he should die before me, I can be happy only in the event of his Jīva living in my house and casting its gladsome look on me. To this end I shall worship the feet of Sarasvatī, the imparters of the Veda-s and eulogize her.' So without apprising her lord of her intentions, she trod the path pointed out by the great men, the masters of powerful Mantra-s and Śāstra-s, and worshipped Deva-s and Brahmins. Having refrained from tasting food for three days and nights, she took light refreshment on the fourth day and that only once. Thus she was engaged in sweet Nīṣṭhā (meditation) for ten months, when Sarasvatī, overjoyed (at her meditation), appeared before her with the radiance of a full moon and said, 'Oh, Līlā, what is thy desire?'

Whereupon the spouse of Padma saluted her and said: 'Oh, thou who art like the moon's rays which appease the heat of existence and age, or like the sun's light which dispels the gloom of mental grief, please.

grant me two boons: firstly, of allowing my lord's Jīva (ego) to remain in my house even after his death, and secondly, of thyself appearing before me visibly, whenever I should think of thee.' These boons the noble Sarasvatī conferred upon her with good grace and returned happily to her abode. Then the wheel of time rolled on rapidly with its nave of Pakṣa (fortnight), month and Rtu (seasons, each of two months), its spokes of days, its axle of years, and its axle-hole of moments. When thus Līlā had passed her days in the company of her lord in unlimited bliss, he suddenly died. Fearing lest the elegant Līlā should pine away under the fire of her excessive grief, Sarasvatī stayed by in the Ākāśa prior to the separation of the king's Jīva (from his body); and in order to dissipate her delusion, spoke (on her husband's death) the following words: 'Cover up thy deceased husband's body with flowers. Then the flowers only will fade and not the body. The (king's) Jīva, without quitting the body, will rest in the golden harem. Then resting on the arms of the king, thou shalt assuage thy grief.' So saying, Sarasvatī vanished from view. According to the words of the 'Voice of Silence', namely Sarasvatī, Līlā buried her husband's body in flowers.

Then, fainting at the separation from her lord, Līlā contemplated Sarasvatī, who no sooner appeared before her than Līlā addressed her thus: 'I can no longer endure the parting from my lord; thou shouldst take me soon to where he is.'

Thereupon Sarasvatī said: 'Of the three kinds¹ of Ākāśa, namely Cidākāśa (spiritual Ākāśa), Cittākāśa (mental Ākāśa) and Bhūtākāśa (elemental Ākāśa), Cittākāśa is that intermediate state in which the mind is when it flits from one object to another in the elemental Ākāśa of objects. When the hosts of Saṃkalpa-s in us perish, then the light of Cit, which is quiescent and immaculate and manifests itself as the universe, will shine in us. If one becomes convinced of the unreality of visible objects, then, through that Jñāna, he will attain Cidākāśa at once. Mayest thou attain through my grace that Cidākāśa.' Through this blessing, Līlā went into Nirvikalpa Samādhi and was able to escape, like a bird from its cage, out of the body which is generally replete with stains and desires through the longing of the mind. There in the heart of Jñānākāśa (Cidākāśa), she saw, in a large town, a much beloved, valiant prince, sixteen years old, reclining on a soft cushion and surrounded and extolled by innumerable kings, women of intense desires and the fourfold armies. Having recognized him to be her dear lord, she entered the king's assembly which she found graced on the eastern side by Muni-s and Brahmins well versed in the Veda-s, on the southern side by handsome ladies, on the western side by kings, and on the northern side by

¹ These three kinds of Ākāśa correspond to the three halls or bodies referred to in our books, namely the Kāraṇa, Sūkṣma (subtle) and Sthūla (gross).

the fourfold armies, etc. Then, having visited many fertile tracts of earth, hills, cities, towns, holy rivers, etc. she, sparkling like lightning, returned to her abode and entered her body; lying entranced, where she contemplated with great love Sarasvatī of white complexion.

Having saluted Sarasvatī who made herself visible, seated on her supreme throne, Līlā questioned her thus: 'How is it that my lord, even after his death, has subjected himself to an Amūrta (formless) creation which is as illusory and bondage-producing as the present state?'

Sarasvatī replied: 'The original evolution of the supreme Brahman, differentiated out of the one Jñānākāśa, brought about in its turn through delusion of regality the Padma creation, and thus it is that a fresh creation arose. Similarly has thy husband now a second birth as Vidūratha. Therefore, after giving ear to what I am going to relate, thou shalt have thy doubts cleared by me.

'In the stainless and immaculate Cidākāśa, there is on one side a Māyāvic dome. This vault is covered by countless peacock feathers, namely the immeasurable Ākāśa. On its golden pillars large and small, namely Mahāmeru, are engraved the picturesque beauties of Indrāṇī, etc., the spouses of Indra and the regents of the quarters. On one side of that dome are hillocks (the elements), Pṛthivī (earth), etc. as well as the tiles called the seven mountains. It is the residence of the revered and old Brahmā surrounded

by his sons,¹ Marīci, etc. full of desires. It reverberates with the songs of Deva-s, passing on their beautiful vehicles, which songs vibrate from the Vinā (lute) of Ākāśa. It is resonant with the buzzing sound of Siddha hosts living in the Ākāśa. It resounds with the never-ceasing sound of the strife between Deva-s and Asura-s, of great egoism. It is in such an incomparable Māyāvic dome that there was a region called Girigrāma in the midst of a certain tract in a certain spot of that dome. That tract boasts of the possession of hills, rivers and forests. There lived in it a great Brahmin householder who had a sacrificial fire and was well versed in Śāstra-s and Dharma-s. He equalled Vasiṣṭha in beauty, wealth, age, humility, actions, and education, but could not be called Vasiṣṭha in real knowledge. In name at least, this Brahmin could be called Vasiṣṭha. She who worshipped his feet (as his wife) was equal to Arundhatī, but had not her knowledge; yet she passed by the name of Arundhatī. The wife of Vasiṣṭha was this lady on Bhūloka (earth), but the true Arundhatī is in Devaloka. No compeers to these two ladies could be found in all the three Loka-s.

‘While this Vasiṣṭha, the lord of the above-mentioned Arundhatī, was residing with her in the valley, a king came to the forest there on a hunting excursion along with his retinue. The Ṛṣi saw

¹ Marīci and other Ṛṣi-s are associated here with desires, in accordance with *The Secret Doctrine* which calls them Barhiṣad-s, yielding to humanity their bodies of desire.

them and reflected within himself: "The wealth of kings is indeed beneficent and enviable. When shall I be able to be the ruler of the earth with retinues encircling me, with Cāmara-s (chowries) waving? When shall I be able to reign triumphant as a monarch, having all under my sway and be locked in the embrace of sweet females with beautiful breasts bedaubed with red ointment?" From that day forward, Vasiṣṭha was seized with intense desires and, in eager anticipation of the realization of such desires, he performed Karman-s regularly. Dotage having come upon him like the frost upon a lotus, his lady implored me for aid like yourself and was blessed by me with the similar boon that her husband's Jīva would not leave her house. The Brahmin Vasiṣṭha expired thus with his longing for regality ungratified. Thus was he of the nature of Jīvākāśa in his house.

'Through the Saṃkalpa of the mind which led to the pleasures of regality, Vasiṣṭha who was originally of the nature of the Jñānākāśa became a king. In that state, after his wife, who was a Brahmin lady of great Tapas, found him dead, there arose a twofold thought in her of leaving the corpse of her husband's gross body and joining him in his subtle body. While the Brahmin's sons, house, lands, forests, mountains, etc. were thus (in the gross state), his Jīva was living separate for about eight days and was of the nature of Cidākāśa in that very house. In your former birth, this king, your husband, was a Brahmin. Then you were his wife, going by the name of Arundhatī. You who reign

here as husband and wife, like a loving Cakravāka¹ couple or Pārvatī² and Parameśvara, are no other than Arundhatī and Vasiṣṭha. Oh Līlā, who have a face like the waxing moon, the first creation as a Brahmin when regality was longed for, which I described to you before, is itself illusory. Likewise is this Padma creation. The third creation of birth as Vidūratha of which you were a witness is also unreal, like the reflected image in water.' So said Sarasvatī, the world's mother.

On hearing these words, Līlā questioned her: 'Oh Goddess, thou hast uttered untruth only. How can thy words hold? Where is the Jīva of the Brahmin who lived in this house? Where did we, who separated here, meet together? How did those who were in the other world as well as its hells, the ten quarters,³ etc. join together and come to this pleasant habitation of ours? Is it possible to bind the infuriated elephant of Indra within part of a mustard seed? Can the Mahāmeru mountain enter a lotus seed and be crushed by a small bee sitting over it? Can lions be vanquished in a war with angry gnats and then enter an atom? Thy words are incredible and do not fit in with truth.'

The Goddess replied: 'I did not tell thee an untruth. I will now explain how my words are

¹ Cakravāka-s are a species of birds.

² Śiva and his wife.

³ Besides the eight principal and intermediate quarters, the Nadir and the Zenith are taken into account.

true. Persons like myself never transgress the laws of Īśvara, but hold to them as true. The Brahmin's Jīva lives invisibly in his own house in the city. His kingdom and regality are of the nature of Jñānākāśa only. Now, Oh Līlā, Vasiṣṭha of the nature of Cidākāśa, when he became overjoyed (by the sight of the king), saw all these things in the Manasākāśa. This old thought (or creation) of Vasiṣṭha, without manifesting itself as such to thee, now appears to thee as different (as Padma creation). Just as the many events of the Jāgrat (waking) state are not enacted in the dreaming state, the Padma creation and its thought predominate without the reminiscences of the Vasiṣṭha state. Out of the above-mentioned, all-pervading Jñānākāśa, shining through Sat which is its own power and forms part of that (Jñāna) Ākāśa, arose this terrible universe through the Saṃkalpa of the mind, like an image reflected in a glass. All the shining universes are latent within the Jñāna Reality which is the illumined, supreme Atom. Therefore it is that the above-mentioned earth, etc. of the Brahmin will manifest themselves in and out of Jñāna. Now thou shalt know all these directly.' So said Sarasvatī, when Līlā asked her: 'It was stated by thee that the Brahmin expired on the eighth day. That period passed for me as milleniums. Please explain this to me.' Then the goddess continued: 'Just as space which, as mentioned before, is nothing but a play (or mode) of consciousness, is not all-pervading and hence not real, so also is time. As it is the

Jñāna light alone, devoid of the modifications of Māyā, that manifests itself as time and space, there is no such thing as the limit of time or space. Through the illusion of death, the body became entranced for a moment and the Jīva parted from it. Becoming oblivious of all the thoughts of its former body, it is filled with the thoughts of this life only. It is only when the Jīva revives from the fatal trance of such false conceptions as “I am greatly supported by these”, “My body is getting fat”, “He is my parent”, “I am going to die in so many years”, “My relatives are augmenting in number”, “This is my beloved seat” and so on—it is only then that the Jīva will begin to know its real state. Therefore thou forgettest all about thy former birth, remembering only this birth.’

After Sarasvatī had spoken these words, Līlā said: ‘Having been blessed by thee with divine vision, I have understood all things truly. Now to gratify my desire, please show me the abode of Vasiṣṭha and others.’

To which Sarasvatī of the form of the Veda-s said: ‘This gross body of thine, bred out of Karman-s, is an impediment in the way of thy getting such knowledge. If thou shouldst become entirely oblivious of thy body and know thyself as distinct from it and then become of the nature of the pure Bliss Enjoyer which is also Jñāna light and Sat, after being cleansed of all Māyā impurities, then thou shalt be able to reach the hallowed state. Thou shalt then know, with delusions removed from thy mind, that Brahman only is thyself

and all the universe, like gold converted into many ornaments. It is not worldly desires but the pure Vāsanā-s that tend to develop the true Jñāna. Thou art not yet free of desire for worldly objects. Therefore it is not possible for thee to attain Jñāna. Persons like myself can easily enter into the pure Brahman. But those who are like thyself have a subtle (lunar) body of the nature of mind, replete with desire, and it, in turn, generates the gross body. Just as snow melts with the rays of the sun and is converted into water, so thy gross body will be changed permanently into the subtle body through development of the true Jñāna and the abandoning of the Vāsanā-s. This is the Jīvan-mukti state. Then Jñāna alone will prevail in thee. Therefore thou wilt have to perceive the former creation through thy original, subtle body (of Ātivāhika), after stilling (or entrancing) this body of thine.'

When Sarasvatī had blessed her thus, Līlā asked what efforts should be made to realize that end. To which Sarasvatī replied thus: 'Those only can cognize the higher states who have developed in themselves Śravaṇa (hearing and study of spiritual books), Manana (contemplation) and Nididhyāsana (reflection from all standpoints), uninterrupted bliss arising through concentration upon that ancient (one) Principle, renunciation of all, non-desire, and the intense reasoning practice, followed through the path of the Veda-s, that this world is never existent. Those only are on that path of Brahman, who are ever

engaged in finding the certain knowledge that the universes, which are not other than "I" or "It", do not really exist, as they did not exist from the very beginning, and who are engaged in seeking liberation, through such knowledge, free from the seer and the seen and from attachment and hatred. After one is convinced that that knowledge which renders itself oblivious of visible things is the true one and the means to find the Ātman, ceaseless endeavour to gain the certainty of Brahman alone brings Liberation. With such practice, the pure Jñāna will dawn.'

Sarasvatī and Līlā who thus conferred together that night, went into Svarūpa Samādhi, free from the trammels of their body and remained motionless. In this state, Sarasvatī shining with her former Jñāna body, along with Līlā with her newly assumed Jñāna one, rose up in the Ākāśa, ten digits high. Having penetrated far into the Ākāśa which is like a great ocean at the time of deluge, they observed there the following. In the immeasurable, transparent and subtle Cidākāśa, there were to be found the hosts of Siddha-s who journeyed fleetier than wind. In it roamed, in all quarters, Rākṣasa-s and Piśāca-s as well as innumerable Yogin-s with the faces of dogs, cows, camels and asses. There were also the multitudinous Dākinī-s (elementals), dancing about gleefully and the white Gaṅgā with its fast current. There the songs of Nārada and Tumburu were heard vibrating on their lyre. Clouds, as at the end of a Kalpa, rained down their waters without any noise, like a painted picture.

They saw beevies of fair women collected together. Then they passed through diverse places for ten Ghaṭika-s' distance, some full of gloom, inaccessible to any, and others, radiant with the lustre of Agni (fire) or the Sun journeying on his swift car. Thus passed they through the Ākāśa of the three worlds, wherein abode the myriads of Jīva-s created by Brahmā buzzing like swarms of flies collected on a ripe fig fruit.

Then to reach their longed-for place, they crossed Brahma's egg¹ and arrived at Girigrāma in the Loka where Vasiṣṭha lived. As the visitors were invisible to the menials, relatives and offsprings of the Brahmin suffering from dire pain, Līlā of Satya-saṃkalpa willed that the residents of the house should see her and her companion. Thereupon, taking these two, who were like Lakṣmī and Pārvatī, to be some sylvan goddesses, the menials, etc. worshipped them and paid them respect. The eldest son addressed them thus: 'You should lighten the load of grief under which we are groaning since the demise of our parents. Oh ladies of great knowledge, are there any results not attainable through the visits of great personages like yourselves?' Thereupon the effulgent Līlā touched their forehead and relieved them of their grief. Then both of them disappeared from view that very instant.

'Now that we have accomplished our object of seeing the different states of the universe according to our thought, please acquaint me with thy further wish.'

¹ i.e. the world.

So said Sarasvatī to divine Līlā, at which the latter asked the former: 'How came it that during our Samādhi, the persons seated in the regal assembly were unable to see me whilst those in the beautiful house alone were able to do so?'

Sarasvatī replied: 'It is only through the development of Jñāna that the dual substances in this world will become non-dual. As thou wert in possession of Jñāna (knowledge), not freed from the thoughts of "I" (or individuality), the true (or voluntary) Saṃkalpa did not arise in thee. Hence it was that those in the royal assembly were not able to see thee. But in the second case, with the possession of the true Jñāna divested of all thoughts of individuality, thou created the conception of "I" through thy own Saṃkalpa and it was only then that the sons, etc. saw thee.'

Then Līlā, overjoyed, spoke the following words: 'Through thy grace, Oh Sarasvatī, I have known all my former births as clearly as daylight. I have cleansed myself of all sins arising from the three Guṇa-s. After being differentiated as a separate entity out of the one Brahman, I have undergone different births in 800 bodies.¹ Like bees in a lotus flower, I have been inhabiting the many worlds created through Māyā-Vikalpa (or the modifications of Māyā). I was born as a Vidyādhara lady and then as a human being through the force of Vāsanā-s. In another Loka of

¹ The number given above nearly tallies with that stated in the Theosophical literature by Mr. A. P. Sinnett.

Māyā-Vikalpa, I went through a series of births in the different bodies of Indrāṇī, a huntress clad in leaves, a bird rending the snare in which it was enmeshed, a king of the Saurāṣṭra country and a mosquito. Thus have I been wandering in many births, and having been tossed to and fro in the clutches of Māyā, like a straw in the ocean waves, I have now been landed safely on the shore of Mukti (liberation) through thy aid.' Thus did Līlā eulogize her and both then mounted up the Ākāśa.

Passing through the Ākāśa by means of Yoga power, they went to where Padma was and saw his body. After that, they went to where the king Vidūratha was, who was the second incarnation of king Padma. At this juncture, they observed the incomparable king of Sindhu of tremendous powers march against Vidūratha. A fierce war was waged between the two armies, striking terror into the heart of even Death. Vidūratha's numerous army was reduced by the enemy to an eighth of its original number. Then the sun disappeared from view, as if afraid either of this terrible war or of the mountain of carcasses. With the setting in of intense darkness, the armies ceased to battle. With the disappearance from the field of the enemy's hosts, king Vidūratha returned with a broken heart along with the shattered remnants of his army to his own palace. Whilst he rested upstairs in sleep, Sarasvatī and Līlā came to where he lay. Being refreshed by their Tejas (radiant effulgence) which was like the nectarean rays of the moon, his

lotus-like eyes opened and beheld before them these two ladies whom he saluted and eulogized.

Then in order to acquaint Līlā with the glorious lineage of this race, Sarasvatī willed that the minister lying near the king should wake up from his deep sleep. Instantaneously, the minister shook off his lethargy and seeing Sarasvatī saluted her. Then she asked him to trace from the beginning the history of the king's family. The minister then began thus: 'In the race of Manu Vaivasvata,¹ the most esteemed of kings, there was born a king of the name of Kumbharatha (or Kundaratha) who had a son Bhadraratha, a king of kings. The last had in his turn Akhilaratha (or Viśvaratha) as son and through him a grandson by the name of Manoratha. This grandson brought forth Viśnuratha who, in his turn, had as his offspring Br̥hadratha. This king had, in his line of descendants, Sindhuratha, Śailaratha, Kāmaratha and Mahāratha, who begat, in this place, the present king of kings, Vidūratha. The mother who bore the present king went by the appellation of Sumitrā. His father, having controlled his mind, abdicated his kingdom in favour of his son, then ten years old, and led the life of a recluse in the forest. Now Vidūratha, our king, reigns with perfect justice.'

As soon as the minister had finished these words, Sarasvatī, in order to enable the king to know easily the events of his former births through his Jñāna

¹ The Manu of this Mānvantara or Round.

(spiritual) vision, touched the king's head lovingly with the palm of her hand, and blessed him with divine vision. Whereupon the gloom of Māyā that had obscured his mind like a great antagonist flew away from it and he was able to recognize himself, in the previous body of King Padma sporting with Līlā. Then a pleasant sensation of marvel and joy arose in him, the former on account of the diverse workings of Māyā, and the latter, because of the knowledge of Māyā he derived through the grace of these (the world's) mothers. With these thoughts in his mind, he placed their feet on his head and said: 'In the one day that passed from the extinction of my former body up to now (as seen through my divine vision), I have spent seventy years with this my present body. I have also known all the events that transpired during that period. Whence are all these curious anomalies of Māyā?'

Thereupon Sarasvatī of the form of divine grace vouchsafed the following reply: 'The trance called Death is always accompanied at the very spot and in that very instant by the great delusion of rebirths (and *vice versa*). Now the conception of the duration of seventy years arose only through the delusion of the Karman-s performed by thee while in life. Know therefore and perceive for thyself that when thy mind was rendered immaculate like Ākāśa, free from all illusions, such conceptions of time vanished (as all conceptions of time arise through the Vikalpa-s of the mind only). They (the events of seventy years) are only like long-drawn dreams of many events enacted

in one Muhūrta (forty-eight minutes). Even our life during the waking state appears prolonged in diverse ways through many unreal events. To speak truly, there is no such thing as birth or death for thee. Thou art the true Jñāna alone. Thou art the eternal, supreme state. Hence, though seeing the whole universe, thou seest it not. Being of the nature of all, thou art shining through thy wisdom in the Ātmic Reality. An old adage runs to the effect that a baby, which is obsessed while in the cradle, will be freed from such possession in the crematorium only. Similarly is the Ajñāna (illusion) in man; and to the ignorant, full of this painful Ajñāna, the universe appears to be real. Persons ignorant of gold assert an ornament made of gold to be an ornament alone and not gold. Likewise, persons devoid of spiritual vision maintain this universe to be inert (and not spirit, the seer free from the seen). Know also all the universe, arising through the egoism of "I" and "mine", etc. to be nothing but a dream and the different objects seen therein to be as illusory as things in a dream. Such objects and universes are of the nature of that Jñāna (Reality) which is the permanent Paramākāśa, actionless, full, vast and immaculate. It is the one reality which, being all, and having all the different Śakti-s (potencies), manifests itself, without being diminished thereby, in different forms according to the fructification of time and Karman-s. Through Līlā, I have initiated thee into the mysteries of the true Jñāna state.

Thy mind has been illumined through the undecaying Tattva (Truth). Therefore we shall depart.'

After reflecting upon the enjoyment (of bliss) into which he was now initiated, Vidūratha remarked: 'Even persons coming to me for aid are accustomed to receive whatever they long for. Therefore is it surprising for me to attain the object of my quest at the hands of you both who are like the fresh Cintāmaṇi?¹ When shall I be able to resume my former body of Padma?' To which Sarasvatī replied: 'You will perish in this war and with your death, you will resume your Padma body.' Here a herald came in with the following announcement to the king: 'An ocean-like army is discharging showers of arrows at us, and our town is reduced to ashes through the enemy's flames. Oh puissant king! I have to announce to thee these painful tidings.' While the information was thus being given to the king, his ears were deafened by the terrible sounds of the enemy's hosts which made the hearts of all in the three worlds to quail. The cries of shrieking, roving townsmen mingled with those of the enemy and rent the air. The hissing flames, which were like Vāḍava Agni, enveloped the whole scene with its volumes of smoke. The whole town became a heap of ruins. All these devastations were personally witnessed by Sarasvatī and Līlā, the king and his minister. At this time, the

¹ This is a stone supposed to yield anything wished for by its possessor.

consort of King Vidūratha came to where her husband was with great trepidation. Her handmaids who accompanied her apprised the king of the fact that the damsels and wealth in the palace were being ravished and ravaged by the foe. Hearing this, he entrusted his wife to the custody of those near him and sallied forth to war.

Now Līlā, the spouse of Padma, was extremely surprised to find Līlā, the spouse of Vidūratha, an exact counterpart of herself, like an image reflected in a glass. Thereupon she queried Sarasvatī as to how she was duplicated. The moon-coloured Sarasvatī cleared her doubts in the following manner: ‘Actuated by an excessive love towards thee, thy husband Padma thought, at the moment of death, of enjoying thy company without being ever separated. Accordingly he was able to get thee here. Whatever is thought of by one at the time of his death, that will be realized by him afterwards. Will a glass reflect other than that which is placed before it? Inasmuch as death, birth, mental delusion, the waking, dreaming and dreamless states are all one, not having another as cause (or each of them not having another as the cause), all things that are and that are not, are of the nature of delusion only and hence increase beyond number. Stainful enjoyments are of two kinds. Some experiences arise as the result of former ones. Others arise anew, being entirely different from the previous ones. Hence, being in the former case, the new Līlā with your form, race and conduct

appeared not different from you, like your shadow. It was through the thought of the king that she was moulded in her present form like yourself. Vidūratha will perish in this war and then assume the body of Padma.'

So said Sarasvatī, when the new Līlā petitioned thus: 'Oh thou, who seemest to be Sarasvatī herself whom I adored in former times, please confer on me the boon that, in the event of my partner perishing in this war, I may live in this body of mine along with him wherever he is.' To which Sarasvatī nodded assent.

Again the old Līlā questioned the Mother of the Veda-s: 'How was I able to journey to the higher Loka and Girigrāma with the aid of the Ādhibhautika body only and not with the Ātivāhika body (while the new Līlā was blessed otherwise)?' The goddess replied thus: 'I never give anything (without any cause) to any person. People get things according to (or as the result of) their thoughts. You thought of (acquiring) Jñāna before and implored me for it and I gave you therefore the divine vision longed for by you. This damsel, your shadow, prompted by excessive desire asked of me another boon which was as promptly granted. All men through my grace get whatever their minds long after.'

With a terrible, angry face, the valiant Vidūratha mounted his car, marched into the field of battle and attacked his enemies so furiously as to drive them into the path of death. Both the Līlā-s who had undying

affection for their lord, in anticipation of his death, addressed Sarasvatī thus: ‘Oh mother, how comes it that in spite of our lord’s dauntless courage and your grace, our husband has to die so soon in this war?’ Sarasvatī replied: ‘As the learned Vidūratha longed for the higher spiritual state, he has to merge secondless into the supreme state. This king of Sindhu who has come to oppose him will gain the day over Vidūratha in accordance with my mandates at his propitiation of myself and will become the king.’ Whilst they were discoursing thus, the day broke and the battlefield on both sides became completely void of its living contents. Then the kings, who alone survived, took up their bows and filled the sun, the moon, the quarters and the sky with showers of arrows. The arrows hissed flames everywhere, and it seemed as if the end of the Yuga was approaching. Then Vidūratha was left alone without his car and driver. His bow was unstrung; his armour was shattered to pieces by his enemy’s arrows; his limbs were rent asunder and thrown about; and then his body fell flat upon the ground. Whereupon the new Līlā addressed Sarasvatī thus: ‘My husband is about to breathe his last; please allow me to join my husband.’ Sarasvatī having prepared the way for it, the new Līlā became light and ascended the Ākāśa. Having crossed one after another the Maṇḍala-s (spheres) of clouds, Vāyu, the hot Sūrya (Sun) and Nakṣatra-s (stars), and then Satyaloka and other divine Loka-s and then breaking open the mundane egg and piercing through the septenary

veils of water (Ap), etc. she reached soon the immeasurable and endless Reality of Cidākāśa. There she went into the harem where Padma's dead body was lying, after crossing the Jñānākāśa with its Āvaraṇa-s (veils) in the midst of the many mundane eggs which are as innumerable as the fig fruits in a fig orchard and which are impossible to cross even in the course of a long time and at the speed of Garuḍa (eagle). Concluding that the dead body covered up with flowers was her lord's and that somehow, through Sarasvatī's grace, she had come ahead of him, she sat beside his body and fanned it gently.

Meanwhile the Jīva of King Vidūratha was winging its way in the Ākāśa and without noticing the two ladies, Sarasvatī and Līlā of divine vision, who were behind it, it reached the recess where Padma's body was lying. There these two ladies accompanied it and saw the new Līlā before them. In the golden dome, the Jīva of Vidūratha was arrested in its progress and prevented by Sarasvatī from obtaining ingress into the body of Padma. Then the old Līlā looked for her former body, and not finding it there, asked Sarasvatī what became of it. The goddess replied: 'When you fell into a profound trance of meditation, the ministers taking you for dead disposed of it by consigning it to flames. If you stay on earth with the Ātivāhika body, then it will only revolutionize the world with wonder that the deceased Līlā came corporeally here from Devaloka. And as you have divested yourself of all Vāsanā-s in this your Ātivāhika

body, it is but right that you should abandon that Adhibhautika body of yours.' Sarasvatī then willed in her mind that the new Lilā should see her. Whereupon the latter was like one who had discovered a long lost personage. Saluting Sarasvatī by falling at her feet, she eulogized her.

While the two Lilā-s¹ were thus in the company of Sarasvatī, the latter let slip the grip she had on the Jīva of Vidūratha which therefore entered into the nasal orifice of Padma's body in the form of Prāṇa and permeated the whole parched frame. Then blood began to circulate freely throughout its fleshy tenement and the deceased king woke up, rubbing his eyes. He asked the bystanders who those were who stood nearby. Whereupon the old Lilā prostrated herself before the king and said that she herself was the wife congenial to him, that the new Lilā was the offspring of his mind which had thought of a form similar to hers, and that the third personage was no other than the immaculate Sarasvatī.

After she had pronounced these words, Padma fell at the feet of Sarasvatī who, laying her beautiful hands on his head, blessed him with long life with his wives, exalted fame and ever-increasing wealth, so that he might render people happy by destroying vice and peopling the world with great, wise men. With these words, Sarasvatī withdrew to her silent abode,

¹ It is thus clear that the two Lilā-s represent the astral and the physical bodies of beings which are counterparts of one another.

and the king praised her with the following words: "May Sarasvatī, the Goddess who presides over the tongues of all men and the departments of knowledge, prosper long in this world." Then the emperor Padma along with his wives wielded his sceptre over the earth for 80,000 years. With the blessing conferred by Sarasvatī, he shortened then and there the seven kinds of births and attained on earth the Jīvan-mukti state. Finally he attained the state of Videha-mukti which never ceases, even though great Kalpa-s come to an end.

3. THE STORY OF KARKAṬĪ

Summary—Having shown fully that the universe is but the diversity of Māyā, being in its true state, Caitanya (consciousness) *per se*, which can be perceived through divine vision, the author in this story describes the play of that Caitanya in the present state.

Now that thou hast heard the story of Līlā which removes all belief in the reality of visible things, know that Brahman alone is that which is the non-dual and which is Sat, Cit and Ānanda, but which manifests itself as this paltry universe. Therefore shake thyself free of this terrible burden of the universe, subject to destruction. Know also that the eternal, supreme Jīva is but the Light of Brahman,

shining steady and quiescent like a lamp in a windless place or an ocean without waves, being, like Brahman, above speech, all pervading, all-full, transcendent, immaculate, and indescribable even by the cognizers of that Sat. Like small pieces of wood, which by attrition generate a little fire and expand into a vast flame, the Jīva through its manifold experience of many objects generates in itself the differentiated concepts of 'I', etc. Through its Saṃkalpa, Ahaṃkāra is engendered, and by virtue of this Ahaṃkāra, different names such as Citta, Manas, Prakṛti, Māyā, etc. have been superimposed by the wise upon this all-full Jīva. Manas which expands through Saṃkalpa-s and Vikalpa-s is generated thus with Brahman as its cause. The universes which appear only through Manas are only its modes. Alone the ocean of Jñāna shines with its countless waves of Vṛtti-jñāna (mental modifications). The universe appears to be real through Manas only. This reality is like a dream extending over a long period.

Like the delusion that there is a thief, arising out of the want of true knowledge, when the trunk of a tree is seen by the wayside on a dark night, the conception of the reality of the universe arises in the absence of the knowledge that all is Brahman. Just as there is no difference between Jīva and the imperishable Brahman when one forgets about them, there is no difference at all between Jīva and Citta. Similarly there is not the slightest difference between the ephemeral Manas and the universes. Now listen to the

story of a powerful Rākṣasa woman who lived in days of yore; it will relieve thee of all doubts.

This Rākṣasī lived on the northern slopes of the Himālaya-s and was called Karkaṭī. Being a Rākṣasa woman, she was large-mouthed, crescent-teethed and lightning-eyed. It seemed as if the dark rocks themselves yielded their contents to frame her legs and hands wherewith to move and act. Her laugh was like a thunder clap. Her eyes whirled in their sockets, like creatures that circle round and round but do not run away. Her thighs which were like big date trees supported a huge, cumbrous body. Her nails, able to pierce the clouds, were of adamantine density. She afflicted all creatures on the earth with her insatiable hunger, which blazed day and night like the Manvantaric flames. Even were all creatures of Jambū-dvīpa to fall a prey to her capacious stomach, she would find them a scanty meal, like an ocean which receives river-waters, and crave for more. Her gastric fire would be only slightly appeased, like the autumnal heat with slight showers. As she wanted to appease this fire without injury to herself, she performed Tapas by propitiating Brahmā for aid. For this purpose, she resorted to the Himālaya-s and having bathed, stood on one leg on the ground and concentrated her eyes upon the sun shining in the sky. After she had performed such a painful Tapas for 1,000 years, the lotus-seated Brahmā appeared visibly before her. Are there any objects which cannot be acquired in this world, even by the vicious, through the performance of uncommon

Tapas? With the arrival of Brahmā before her, she made obeisance to him mentally without stirring from the spot and reflected thus: 'In order to assuage my ever-increasing fire, if I transform myself into an iron-like Jīva-sūcīkā (living needle), I can enter into the bodies of all in the world and consume as much food as I require.' Whilst these thoughts were revolving in her mind, Brahmā asked her the object of her wish. Karkaṭī replied: 'Oh Lord that favourest those devotees who contemplate thee and praise thee, thy servant wishes to become a Jīva-sūcīkā.'

Thou shalt become Sūcīkā having the prefix *vī* attached to thy name and hence be called Viṣūcīkā.¹ Thou shalt afflict those who feed themselves on unwholesome food, who betake themselves to vicious courses, who are ignorant or ferocious, who live in insanitary places, and who are wicked. Thou shalt mingle with Prāṇa-vāyu in the heart and afflicting people with the diseases Padma, Plīha,² etc. thou shalt be (the disease) Viṣūcīkā. Thou shalt enter both Saṅga and Nirgaṇa³ people. But in the case of entry in Saṅga men, to remedy the above disease, the following Mantra-s⁴ will have to be uttered:

¹ Viṣūcīkā is the disease called cholera. The word is compounded of *vī* and *sūcīkā*. *Sūcīkā* is from *sūc* 'to make known'.

² These are splenetic diseases.

³ Saṅga men are the good, while Nirgaṇa are the bad.

⁴ This is the Mantra to arrest cholera. Excluding the Bijākṣara-s such as Om, etc. the meaning of the Mantra is:

ओं ह्रां ह्रीं श्रीं रां विष्णुशक्तये नमो भगवति विष्णुशक्ति
एहि । एनां हरहर दहदह हनहन पचपच मथमथ उत्सादय
उत्सादय दरे कुरुकुरु स्वाहा । विषूचिके त्वं हिमवन्तं गच्छगच्छ,
जीवसार चन्द्रमण्डलं गतोऽसि स्वाहा ॥

‘The reciter of the above Mantra should write it on the left hand (with the right) and should pass the left hand over the body of the diseased person. Then he should contemplate Karkātī, who is crushed with the pestle of the Mantra and hence angry, as having departed for the Himālaya-s. Then he should regard the diseased person as bathing in the ambrosia of the moon and as free from diseases, mental or physical. Being pure and having duly performed Ācamana (sipping water), with all his senses under perfect control, he will destroy all Viśūcikā-s through the due performance of the above-mentioned means.’

So saying, Brahmā vanished from view, whereupon this mountain-sized personage reduced herself to the size of a Jīva-sūcikā and entered into the minds of the ferocious as well as the timid in order to make them perish. Having entered in the form of Vāyu within all Jīva-s on earth and in Ākāśa, she fed upon their lives in the form of Jīva-sūcikā and Vāyu-sūcikā.

‘Oh Viṣṇu-śakti, fit to be worshipped, prostrations to thee; please come here, take her, take her (Viśūcikā); burn her, burn her; kill her, kill her; cook her, cook her; churn her, churn her; destroy her, destroy her; drive her, drive her; Oh Viśūcikā; go away to the Himālaya-s; Oh the essence of Jīva-s, you are of (or go to) the sphere of the moon.’

Surfeited with such enjoyment, she exclaimed: 'Agitating and making me despondent, my desires make even the needle to wear away and, making me giddy, destroy me. Away with these desires of mine! With a cruel heart, I have afflicted many lives in vain. Therefore, I shall divest myself of all desire and perform Tapas in the Himālaya-s.' So saying, she gave up all fluctuation of mind, becoming devoid of longing for objects. Thus a thousand years passed, purifying her of the twofold Karman-s (virtuous and sinful).

While she was engaged thus in spiritual contemplation with an illumined mind, free from the pain of love and hatred, and ignoring this universe, the all-full Jñāna dawned in her mind and therefore Brahmā came voluntarily to her and imparted the following truths: 'Thou hast attained the Jīvan-mukti state. Thy mind is illumined; yet thou shalt remain in thy old form of a Rākṣasa woman and support thyself on earth on the bodies of persons without Jñāna, as well as the cruel and the base. Happiness shalt thou enjoy thus.' With these blessings, Brahmā disappeared.

Contemplating Brahman alone as the non-dual one and as the All, she rested in the actionless state of 'That'. After remaining thus in Nirvikalpa Samādhi for a very long time, she returned to the normal state, in contact with her mind. Instantaneously the thoughts of her old hunger revived. And as the conception of 'I' is incidental to this body so long as it exists in the universe, she resolved upon tasting flesh, the food peculiar

to Rākṣasa-s. Then exulting in the consumption of the body of the ignorant, as directed by Brahmā, she retired to the slopes of the Himālaya-s and reached the country of the hunters. While she was dwelling in the forest there, a king chanced to go to it along with his just minister. The night was enveloped with such intense gloom as not to be dissipated by the light of even sun, moon and Agni (fire) combined together. Fearlessly did the king and minister perambulate together on such a night, scaring away Piśāca-s and other mischievous creatures.

As soon as Karkatī saw these two passing in the forest, she reckoned upon a good repast. At first, she thought that they were ignorant persons without true Jñāna and as such productive of pain in this and the higher worlds, as also everywhere. On further reflection, she said to herself: 'According to the direction of Brahmā, those who are not content with what comes in their way are of weak mind. On the other hand, would anyone be so foolish as to injure those who have illumined minds and good qualities? Would such virtuous persons suffer thereby? Such illumined persons have undying fame, long life, and bliss, worthy of being venerated by all. As they are more fond of one another than even of their own lives, they will, at their own risk, protect another amongst themselves. They have even the power to make their devotees obtain the good graces of Yama and thus overcome him. While even a Rākṣasa woman like myself goes to the length of worshipping the wise,

who else will fail to do the same, like a fond dog? Like the full moon which protects this earth (and makes it appear gay), the wise gladden the hearts of those who visit them. Persons not associating with such wise men debase themselves and are as men dead; otherwise they would attain the good effects of Mokṣa, etc.' Then she decided to test whether they were Jñānin-s or not.

With this purpose, she roared aloud (unperceived) in the Ākāśa, outvying the thunder, with the following words: 'Oh ye who resemble the sun and the moon in the ineffable forest of Ākāśa, showering rain like clouds, Oh ye who are like the countless hosts of vermin writhing and perishing underneath the dark and terrible stone of Māyā, have ye come here simply for the purpose of falling a prey to me this instant? Ye seem to me to be wise ones, and yet it strikes me that ye belong to the other class also. To which class then do ye belong?'

At this the king thus addressed her: 'Oh Rākṣasa woman, ever prone to injure creatures, hear me. Where are you now? We listened to the sounds you uttered like the buzzing of a young bee.' Thereupon the lady exclaimed 'Well done' and laughed aloud, standing before them. The king, observing her huge form by the intense lustre of her large teeth, was not in the least appalled at the sight and said to her: 'Do not open wide your capacious mouth like the Maināka (mountain) and afflict yourself thereby. Whatever may be said by persons who do

not long after the fruits of actions that such fruits are baneful and do not really exist, the light-minded are ever engaged in such only; but the wise who have great quiescence are bent upon performing transcendent spiritual actions through their subtle intelligence. Our valour is such as to blow away, like mosquitoes, persons of vicious proclivities like yourself. Therefore abandon your foolhardiness. Apprise us of your real intentions. We are able to confer, even in dream, any objects begged of us with intense desire by any person approaching us.'

At these words of the king, the woman came to understand that they were persons of unlimited Jñāna, power and quiescence of mind. Then in extreme wonder at their noble words and truth, she muttered to herself: 'A stainless mind can be judged through speech, face and eyes. Through their expressions, their opinion also can be well gauged. Those whose doubts (about the higher spiritual path) have not been cleared, along with the love of wealth, should be classed among the ignorant.' Then addressing these two great ones, she inquired who they were.

The minister replied, pointing to the personage near him: 'He is the king of hunters and I am his minister. Nightly we patrol everywhere to punish the vicious and protect the virtuous. On that mission we have wended our way hither.'

Whereupon Karkaṭi said: 'By the counsels of a wicked minister, a good king too is turned into bad

ways; even a bad king becomes virtuous, if counselled by an honest and virtuous statesman. Conversely, a wise king generates a good minister. Therefore when a king is counselled by a statesman of great discrimination, what blessings will he not achieve? As is the king, so are his subjects. Those only are qualified to be kings or ministers who have developed nobleness of disposition, equal vision over all and have made a profound study of Jñāna works. Otherwise they are not worthy of discharging such duties. Therefore, if you are not well versed in these Jñāna books, you will have to replenish my stomach and forfeit all chances of enjoying your youth. I will now catch you both, who are like two lions, in the cage of my questions. Try to unlock its portals with the keys of your discrimination. Else, you will not be able to outlive that period.' On the king asking her to state the questions, the lady rained her queries on them both like ambrosia.

Muni Vasiṣṭha continued: Oh Rāma, listen attentively to the questions posed by the Rākṣasa woman:

- (1) What is that atom which is the cause of the origin, preservation and destruction of the myriads of heterogeneous universes springing up like bubbles on the surface of the ocean?
- (2) What is that which is Ākāśa and yet is not?
- (3) What is that which, though it is unlimited, has yet a limit?
- (4) What is that which, though moving, yet moves not?

- (5) What is that which, though it is, yet is not?
 (6) What is that which manifests itself as Cit (consciousness) and is yet a stone (or inert)?
 (7) What is that which portrays pictures in the Ākāśa?

(8) What is that atom in which are latent all the microcosms, like a tree in a seed?

(9) Whence do all things originate, like undulations in water, being not different from that cause, like the foam in the ocean?

(10) And in what will these two (undulations and water) become merged as one?

‘If you are able to solve these riddles through your intelligence, then you can aspire to a seat on my head, like fragrant blossoms gracing my locks. Otherwise, if you muddle yourself over these questions through the obtuseness of your heads, you will serve as fuel for the gastric fire blazing in my stomach.’

Then the minister replied: ‘Your questions point to the non-dual Brahman. Being above the reach of mind and the five Indriya-s (organs), it is the endless, absolute Jñāna, more subtle than Ākāśa and the Supreme Atom of atoms (Paramāṇu). Out of that Atom, all mundane eggs arose and into it all were (or will be) absorbed.

Question 2. As there is no such attribute as exterior (or interior) to this all-pervading Brahman, it can be said to be Ākāśa itself; yet it is not the Ākāśa of the elements, as it is pure Jñāna itself.

Question 3. As there is no abode for it in which to abide, it is not limited; and yet it ever abides in all as the absolute Sat.

Question 4. Through its relationship with many objects, it moves about; yet it is devoid of motion, as there is no space outside of itself in which to move.

Question 5. As it cannot be known by being pointed to (as this or that), it is not, and yet it is, as it is "Be-ness" itself.

Question 6. As it is the self-shining Light, it is consciousness *per se*, and yet it is like the inert stone since it has not the power of knowing (being itself the All); (also since it is that which manifests itself in the two aspects of intelligence and matter).

Question 7. This is what depicts pictures of a series of universes in the Cidākāśa, which is very subtle, immaculate and self-existent.

Question 8. As the heterogeneous universes are but the light or manifestation of that One, therefore naught else is but That; yet all the different worlds arising out of the conception of "I", "Thou", etc. are inseparable from it, being but its aspects.'

So replied the intelligent courtier standing by the side of his king, when Karkaṭi became overjoyed with him and then addressed the king for a solution of her questions, in order to sound his depth of knowledge. The king said: 'It is indubitable that this universe is not and it is equally certain that the partless One alone is. Now thou shalt hear an account of the nature of that One namely - Brahman.

Brahman can be attained through the mind after abandoning its Saṃkalpa-s and Vikalpa-s. The origin and dissolution of this universe (which is nothing but a mode of consciousness) take place with the origination and destruction of the Saṃkalpa-s of the mind. Such a process is the real import of the holy sentences in the Veda-s; yet it is exterior to them, as it is only through self-experience that such a process can take place. Brahman represents a state beyond Sat¹ (being) and Asat (non-being) and is the real state of the two. It is the Saṃkalpa of the mind that brings into play the world with all its moving and fixed creatures. Thou hast in thy questions referred to Brahman only which, manifesting itself as this universe, is yet the impartite plenum of Jñāna, being the non-dual Principle from of old. This is the one Reality cognized by men of true love.'

At these words of the king, the Rākṣasa woman felt her body calmed as if showers of nectar had been rained on it. Having steadied herself after her exultation, she spoke the following words: 'Do not all men wear, as their crown, the feet of such holy personages like yourselves who have rare intelligence, like unto a Jñāna-sun, which has neither degree nor stain, neither setting nor rising? Will despondency ever rise in the hearts of those who associate with Ātma-jñānin-s, being, as they are, invincible conquerors

¹ Here Sat and Asat mean existence and non-existence or Puruṣa and Prakṛti, whereas Sattā is applied to Parabrahman which is 'Be-ness' as opposed to being or non-being.

of Mokṣa-loka? Despite your acquisition of all things through Ātman, will you please lay your commands on my head, so that I may serve you in some respect?’

The king replied: ‘Oh wench of the Rākṣasa race, who art like a poisonous fruit in the forest of Viṣadruma (poisonous trees), desist from thy massacre of lives in this world.’ She having nodded assent, the king asked her what such a carnivorous person as herself would do to appease her hunger. The Rākṣasī said that she would resort to Nirvikalpa Samādhi as she did before to alleviate her gastric fire. She remarked further that she would thus pass a long time in the state of Jīvan-mukti, tasting the ambrosia flowing within and then reach Videha-mukti. She promised on her honour not to hurt any creatures, now that she had developed Jñāna.

While she was meditating upon withdrawing, the king said: ‘We have accomplished our object very smoothly. If you will choose to accompany us to our palace and there remain as one of our family, we will bestow upon you the bodies of those villains who take to murder and other crimes. So long as this body endures, thoughts and other pain incidental to it will not disappear. Therefore you can devote yourself to Niṣṭhā (meditation) after quenching the fire in your stomach with the victuals supplied to you in the form of the bodies of the vicious. Thus shall you act in this world with true love.’

Thereupon the woman walked with great joy along with the king and his minister to their golden palace

when the sun rose. Within six days after their arrival, three thousand wretches were handed over to her by the king. Discarding during nights the resplendent form of Lakṣmī with which she shone during the day in that palace, she transformed herself into a Rākṣasa woman and piled upon her shoulders the bodies of the ignorant. Then having taken leave of the king and his counsellor, she fled for meditation to the Himālaya mountains. Even to this day, the king and Karkaṭī¹ are friendly towards one another. So said Vasiṣṭha to Rāmacandra.

4. THE STORY OF AINDAVA (THE SON OF INDU OR THE MOON)

Summary—The author, having shown in the previous story that the light of Brahman alone is Jīva, etc. now tells this story to exemplify the fact that Brahman's manifestation, namely the mind, is alone the universe.

From the foregoing story it is evident that Brahmic Reality, which is the one Truth, alone is. None of the visible objects really exists. The mind alone is the cause of the manifold created objects. To illustrate this, I shall relate to thee, Oh Rāma, a story which thou

¹ Karkaṭī means a snake in one sense.

shalt presently hear. Thou wilt then be convinced that the potency of Jñāna alone manifests itself as this universe. This puerile Manas which ever rises and falls with the ebb and flow of desire, imagines this illusory universe to be true, through its ignorance; but if it should be informed of the real nature of this world, then it will cognize it to be Brahman and pain will forsake such a mind. Should the mind be subject to the heterogeneous modifications of attachment and other desires, then it tends to rebirth, but freedom from their thrall is emancipation.

Once upon a time, Lord Brahmā rose up at dawn of day wishing to generate afresh a new creation, after having been refreshed by sleep during a night of his, when all creation was merged in the one fount. For this purpose, he surveyed the Ākāśa which began to pervade everywhere through his mind; and lo, that Ākāśa became filled with all kinds of creations. Marvelling over the event and longing to know its author, he pointed his finger at one of the suns therein to approach him and inquired of him as to the authorship of himself and all the universe. The sun paid due respects to Brahmā, and said: 'Since even you, Brahmā, the cause of this endless universe, do not know it, I shall try to explain it as far as I can. There is a noble country called Suvarṇatala (golden seat) in a part of the extensive Jambū-dvīpa situated on the Kailāsa hills. It abounds with creations that are all your offspring. In it, there lived a noble Brahmin rejoicing by the name of Indu (the moon) and tracing

his lineage to Kaśyapa, the Ṛṣi. Not blessed with any offspring, he and his spouse resorted with an agitated heart to Kailāsa, the abode of Parameśvara, and underwent severe Tapas, tasting only water and remaining immovable as a tree. Whereupon Paramaśiva was greatly pleased and having approached them, demanded what they wanted. With heads prostrate on the ground, they asked to be blessed with ten erudite sons to free them from all pain. The boon having been granted, the husband and wife lived in joy and were blessed with ten goodly babes. These children grew up well versed in all departments of knowledge. In course of time, the parents died and their sons retired to the Kailāsa hills where they thought to themselves: "Shall we, to relieve ourselves of the indigency which is afflicting us, become leaders of men? As even this situation is a paltry one, let us become kings or rather emperors ruling over the worlds. But even this is insignificant, when compared with the status of Devendra, the lord of nine types of wealth. But this too will not suffice us. Let us become the lotus-seated Brahmā, in which case we can enjoy all kinds of stainless wealth." With this fixed resolve, all the ten seated themselves in the Padma posture and with concentrated minds, having the same purpose, were engaged in meditation thus: "We alone are Brahmā; all creations emanate out of ourselves only." Thus did they pass long aeons of time, oblivious of their body and immovable as wood. When their minds' thoughts were perfected, all the ten became Brahmā

himself. Then the ten Loka-s¹ were created. Ten kinds of creations were generated by these ten personages in their Manas-ākāśa. Out of the ten creations of ten suns, I am one.' So saying, he (the sun) vanished out of sight.

Said Vasiṣṭha to Rāma: As all the visible universes are existent only through the expansion of this crass-mind, the swan-seated Brahmā created, in accordance with this law, all the worlds through his mind only.

5. THE STORY OF DECEITFUL INDRA

Summary—Having shown that the universe is but the mind manifesting as such through the potency of Brahman, the author now proceeds to illustrate, in this story, the fact that the body with its organs, etc., is no other than mind.

The creator of the incomparable worlds and the slayer of Ātman (the Real) is the mind only. The actions of the mind alone are actions; but not so, those of the body.

In the previous narrative of the ten Brahmins related by the sun, they became Brahmā, after performing Tapas in the Padma posture, and created the

¹ This stands for the three worlds of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra, besides Bhū, etc. up to Satya, or for the ten solar systems.

worlds. Who other than Brahmā can easily and truly understand the wonderful potency of the mind? The mind contemplating the body, becomes the body itself and then (enmeshed in it) is afflicted by it. Jñānin-s, through the contemplation of Brahman within, are never affected by the pain assailing this body of nine gates. So indeed were, in days of yore, Indra and Ahalyā who were guilty of adultery.

Here Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha as to who these two were. Then Vasiṣṭha continued thus: In former times, there lived a king by the name of Indradyumna reigning over the country of Magadha. The lady who ministered to his enjoyment like his Prāṇa was called Ahalyā. In that town abode a person named Indra. True to the tradition of adulterous intercourse which occurred in former times between the former Ahalyā and Indra¹ which the present couple of the same name had heard, the living couple began to have sinful intimacy with one another. Like two lovers who come into contact after long parting, she passed some days alone, enjoying the company of her paramour. The king's subjects who were witnesses to this scandalous affair reported it to the just king. On hearing of it he waxed exceedingly wroth and caused the straying couple to be sunk in deep water. Finding that this did not affect them in the least, he caused them to be subjected to many ordeals, such as having them trampled by rutting

¹ It may be remembered that, in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāma revives Ahalyā from the state of being a stone to which she was cursed by her husband Gautama.

elephants with fierce tusks, bathing them in flames of fire and beating them with hammers, etc. In spite of the infliction of such tortures, they did not evince the least symptom of pain, but merely laughed, regarding one another with firm minds as they sat opposite.

Bewildered at the marvellous manner in which they baffled all his attempts to make them feel pain, he asked them how they were proof against tortures. The exulting pair said: 'Oh thou of broad shoulders, as our eyes regale themselves with the lunar ambrosia of one another's face, we revel within in unimpeded bliss and hence are entirely oblivious of our body. This being so, is it possible for us to feel any pain or see our body? We do not experience the slightest pain, even when the body is ripped open. When the mind is intensely fond of anything, there is no perception of pain, even when destruction awaits the body. When the mind is completely lost in any object, who else is there to observe (and feel from) the actions of the body? Even the curses of Muni's and the many Karman-s cannot divert that mind from its condition within. There is no end to the bodies which perished in vain (in the many previous births). All these bodies originate from the mind only. Without water, can a forest exist? It is the mind which transacts all business and is the highest of bodies. Even should this gross body be dissolved, the mind will assume fresh bodies to its liking, as speedily as actions done in dreams. Should this mind be paralysed, then the body will not evince any intelligence.' So said the adulterous couple, on

hearing which, the king looked at them with pleasure. Muni Bharata close by him remarked that the two gave expression to words of wisdom, notwithstanding their minds being under the thralldom of passions. Therefore he banished them both from his realm, so that they might enjoy themselves in foreign lands.

6. THE STORY OF MANAS (MIND)

Summary—After having shown that the mind manifests itself as the external world in the shape of pain or pleasure, the author now illustrates the fact that subjectively the mind is consciousness while objectively it is this universe.

The bliss enjoyed by the adulterous couple in the previous story was described for the purpose of giving a faint idea of Brahmic bliss. All persons have two bodies, a subtle one suitable to the mind and a gross one. The mind performs actions very speedily in this mental body and fluctuates thereby. But the gross body does not know anything and is inert.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma asked to be enlightened as to the nature of this inert and formless body of the mind. To which Muni Vasiṣṭha of the nature of Jñāna replied thus, in the words of Brahmā: The form which the endless Ātman, full of all potencies, assumes through Saṃkalpa is Manas. All conceptions

associated with actions arising out of that real state which is intermediate between the powerful Sat and Asat are nothing but the forms of the mind. No matter whence that mind proceeds or in what form it manifests itself, if it is made to tread the path leading to Mokṣa or to merge into Ātman, then it will be conducive to progress.

Now hearken to an archaic story related by Brahmā of old. In the great forest of dire illusion, frightening to behold and the source of bitter pain, even a fractional part of which measured many myriads of Yojana-s,¹ lived a Puruṣa (personage) with countless eyes and hands. He had a Citta (mind) which flitted everywhere. He had the extended form of Ākāśa. He scourged himself with many carved sticks capable of great speed on his person, and then smarting under the pain and yelling vociferously, he would run in different directions without any mastery over himself. Dashing himself against objects in the intense gloom, he would precipitate himself down the deep and desolate well of sin and there eke out a life of misery. Then emerging out of that well, he would, as before, lash his body and scream, restlessly moving on his heels. In his impetuous haste, he would entangle himself in long brambles and punctured throughout the body, would flutter like a moth in a flame. Then running to a fine

¹ Yojana-s are reckoned by some to be 10 miles; by others, 7 or 8 miles.

plantain garden, he would reach the other extreme of intense exultation. Again and again would he return from this pleasurable garden to the thorny forest and fall into the well and go back again, finding pleasure in none.

Seeing him reel thus giddily many times, we (Brahmā) caught him in our grip to free him from fear and questioned him: 'Who art thou that thus groan under pain? What art thou about in this place? And what is thy intention?'

To this that person replied: 'All persons having the concept of "I" (and other differences) are non-existent to me. I have not been able to find any actions for me to perform in this world. I am quite pained by the heterogeneous differentiations set up by thee. Thou art my enemy, though paltry. It is only through thee that I have identified myself with the pain and pleasure from which I have been suffering.' Having said so, he surveyed his body. His heart began to melt and he cried aloud. Desisting in a moment from his loud wails, he again cast his eyes over his beautiful form and laughed aloud for a long time, fit to burst open his belly. Then, in our presence, he freed himself from the many gross bodies he had assumed (in the many births).

Through the force of grievous destiny, another person was born in another spot. He appeared before us in a plight similar to that of the other individual and scourged himself, when we consoled him as previously. Then this wayfarer passed along the

path and gave up that body. Again he came in another guise and in this life he fell into that deep well. We did not see him emerge out of the well for a long time. Then there appeared in this ever-perturbed forest, this person in the shape of another who, though he was checked in his path and shown the road to true knowledge by us, spurned our advice and still persisted in the obstinate course of lashing himself as he went along. Even now such ferocious persons exist, writhing under great pain and dwelling in such terrible forests full of sharp-pointed thorns and enveloped in such thick gloom as to instil fear into all hearts. But wise men, even should they live in the midst of a fiery, burnt-up forest, regale themselves and rejoice in it as in a cool flower garden wafting sweet odours.

Here Rāma asked the sage Vasiṣṭha to explain the underlying meaning of this story. At which the great Muni continued: (1) The interminable forest referred to in the story is this Saṃsāra (mundane existence) which is devoid of beginning, middle or end, is associated with Māyā and is dreadful and replete with innumerable Vikalpa-s. (2) The Puruṣa (personage) residing in this forest of a universe, filled with the vapour of fiery wrath, stands for the mind whirling with pain. (3) He who checked the impetuous passage of the mind represents discrimination. (4) The mind attained through its opponent, discrimination, the quiescent state of Parabrahman. (5) The mind at first turned away from discrimination

and hence entangled itself in the Vāsanā-s of objects; (6) The well into which the egos sink after macerating their bodies is Naraka (hell); (7) but the plantain garden symbolizes Svargaloka (heaven) full of enjoyments. (8) The forest of trees abounding with thorns is this Bhūloka (earth) with the two sexes full of excessive passion. (9) The personage who, after toppling into the well, was not able to rise from it for a long time stands for the mind not yet freed from sins. (10) The long, pointed thorns represent the men and women of this world, full of passions. (11) The words 'Thou art my enemy though paltry' and 'It is only through thee that I have identified myself with the pain and pleasure from which I have been suffering' are the outbursts of the mind in its last gasp of death through discrimination. (12) The cry is set up when the desires are sought to be annihilated. (13) The bewailings and the invocation for aid result from the pain which the mind with half-developed Jñāna feels when it relinquishes desires. (14) The final, calm joy and the consequent laugh is the bliss arising from the mind merging into pure Jñāna. (15) And the real bliss is that which arises when the mind, divested of all desires through the eternal Jñāna, destroys its subtle form. (16) The bridling of the mind through extreme power refers to the concentration of the same through initiation into Jñāna. (17) The scourging of the body refers to the pain caused by the extreme misconceptions of the mind. (18) The peregrination of the person over a vast field is the roving over the world,

unconscious of the Reality which can be attained only through the mastery of the perishable Vāsanā-s.

Thus it is that all the Saṃkalpa-s and Vāsanā-s which a man generates enmesh him as in a net. All become subject to bondage through their own Saṃkalpa-s and Vāsanā-s, like a silkworm in its cocoon. Having delved into your mind through your unsullied mind and thoroughly sifted it, may you destroy your impure mind. So said the illumined Vasiṣṭha to Rāma of clear mind.

7. THE STORY OF A BĀLA (LAD)

Summary—Through this story, it is sought to show that persons without Ātmic inquiry see as real this world which is of the nature of Saṃkalpa.

The spotless mind of Jñānin-s is no other than the ever imperishable Brahman that has all Śakti-s (potencies) and is ever full. Nought else is but that One. There is nothing which is not found in this Brahmic Reality. This indescribable Reality manifests itself as the many. Out of the infinite potencies in it, arises at one time one potency. This Jñāna-śakti of the immaculate Brahman then manifests itself in the perishable bodies. The different Śakti-s producing fluctuation, hardness, heat, voidness, moisture and destructiveness in Vāyu, stone, fire, Ākāśa, water and

Pralaya are but the one Brahmic potency latent in Brahman, like trees in seeds. They appear multi-form like the plants, etc. on this earth variegated by time, space, etc. It is only the Brahmic Reality that is always and everywhere. It is only that Brahman which manifests itself as Manas through contemplation or as the Jivātman subject to bondage or as the emancipated Paramātman, as well as the universe and the many Śakti-s in it. All the Vikalpa-s of the world seem to be real to men, as the tales narrated to a fickle child by its mother.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma with lotus hands, who was like a cloud raining his bounty upon all, wished to be acquainted with that story. Whereupon that Ṛṣi of rare Tapas began this story of mind's illusions:

A certain lad who had not yet attained discretion prayed to his mother to tell a tale for diversion. Whereupon she related, as if true, the following entirely mythical story: 'Once upon a time, three princes of unflinching bravery and good qualities resided in a city called Void. Of these three; two were never born and the third never went into any womb to be generated. This trio, bent upon the acquisition of everything, rested in the forest of Ākāśa, full of countless fruits, and having allayed their sharp hunger by feeding themselves upon the delicious fruits, went on their way. There they saw three rivers with dashing waves, winding their way on the outskirts of the forest. Of these three rivers with fast currents, two had no water while in the third the dry, white sands were fully

visible on the surface. In this last river, they bathed and drank of the waters. At sunset they retired to a town to be created thereafter (and not then in existence) and there built three houses. Of these three houses, two did not exist at all. The third one did not have walls or wooden superstructure. The three princes went to reside in these three contiguous houses without any wall (or support). These three persons who abode in the three buildings in an invisible town in the Ākāśa found three golden vases near them. Two were shattered to pieces, while the third was a pulverized one. They deposited in this formless vessel a quantity of rice equal to six measures minus ten measures and cooked the same. Having done so, they distributed it to innumerable, mouthless Brahmins. After the Brahmins had thus filled their stomachs, the three princes partook of the remaining meal. Then, delighting themselves with hunting and other pursuits, they spent their time most joyfully.' When the mother thus concluded her story, her innocent child rested in the profound conviction of the genuineness of the mother's tale. Similarly do the ignorant conceive and observe this world to be really existent. The expansion of this mind is Saṃkalpa; and Saṃkalpa, through its power of differentiation, generates this universe. Therefore, Oh Rāma, may you divest yourself of all Saṃkalpa-s and be a Nirvikalpa.

8. THE STORY OF A SIDDHA

Summary—Having shown that persons who have not cognized the seer believe the visual to be real, the author now proceeds to exemplify with this story the fact that time is but a mode of the mind; the visible, though illusory, is a manifestation of Cit.

Ajñānin-s (the ignorant) vacillate greatly in mind through their Saṃkalpa; but Jñānin-s never do so. May you, after clarifying, through your discrimination, your mind, free of all illusions, cognize the pure Truth. Do not be appalled at the idea that you are under trammels, while in fact you are not so. Is it possible for the immaculate and indestructible Brahmic Principle to be bound? While Brahman alone is that which is not subject to the limitations of time, space and substance, is non-dual and is absolute Consciousness, devoid of heterogeneity, what is there in this world to be bound or to gain liberation? All are but the expansion of Saṃkalpa-s (and Vikalpa-s). The expansion of the mind's thoughts (towards objects) is bondage; while the renunciation of the same is emancipation. Through the play of the mind in objects, proximity appears to be great distance and *vice versa*. Through the force of the mind, a Kalpa is reckoned by it as a moment and *vice versa*. There is a story current which illustrates this idea well. From that it will be apparent to you that the legerdemain of the world is enacted by the mind and the mind alone.

Vasiṣṭha continued: A king who traced his lineage to Hariścandra ruled over the country of Uttara Pāṇḍava. He commanded the eulogies of Lakṣmī (the goddess of wealth) and Sarasvatī (the goddess of knowledge). On his arms rested Vijaya-lakṣmī (the goddess of victory). This personage, by name Lavaṇa, was once seated on his throne decked with the nine gems and encircled by his sagacious statesmen. Into that stately assembly, walked in majestically one who was well versed in the art of Indrajāla (magical tricks). Having paid due respects to and eulogized the king, he entreated him to witness his feats. He waved his bunch of peacock's feathers dotted with moon-like eyes. Like Māyā which, through the immaculate Parabrahman, deludes men with the variegated creations of the world, this Siddha performed several feats before the king by waving the large circle of peacock's feathers, which the king no sooner saw than lo! before his mental vision he saw the following events enacted: A messenger despatched by the king of Sindhu entered the scene with a high mettled charger like that of Indra and said that that victorious horse was intended by his master for the king Lavaṇa. Then the Siddha asked the king to mount upon the same, since no other horse could vie with it. Acceding to his words, the king stared like a statue intently in the direction of the horse and was entranced for a Muhūrta, like Yogin-s in Samādhi. Then those assembled before the king became seized with doubt and wonder, their faces

being contracted like lotuses with closed petals. After the courtiers had been thus in a state of mental perplexity and fear for about four Muhūrta-s, the king's body relaxed from its rigidity and began to fall prostrate before the throne, when those nearby propped it up.

Then the king gradually recovered consciousness and the obedient ministers asked him how his pure mind had lost its equilibrium. After shaking off his stupor, the king replied: 'When the Siddha revolved the circle of peacock's feathers and uttered some words, I became giddy and noticed a horse, which I mounted with full memory and rode speedily a long distance for the chase. Like Ajñānin-s who wallow in their wealth because of a non-discriminative mind, I entered on horseback a desolate waste with seething heat that scorched all things and even the senses. There I and my charger became jaded by our peregrinations in the forest. I was despondent of heart and had ceaseless pain till the sun set in the west. Like a Jñānin who frees himself from the load of Saṃsāra and proceeds onward on his path, after crossing the waste, I reached a delicious forest teeming with many kinds of trees such as Jambū, Kadamba and lime, and reverberating with the music of feathered songsters. Whilst I was thus riding, a creeper high up in a tree twined round my neck and immediately the horse bolted out of my sight, like sins from a bather in the Gaṅgā, leaving me rocking to and fro aloft in the air with the creeper encircling my neck. Thus dangling, my body

became numb on account of the cool winds blowing on it, and my mind paralyzed. Without bath, worship, meditation or food during the day, I saw night approach with her grim attendants, darkness, pain and extreme shivering which set my teeth chattering.

‘At dawn of day the glorious orb arose, dispelling that darkness like Jñānin-s driving away their mental gloom. Then I cast my eyes around and cut asunder the creeper that twined around my throat and then, having descended, looked about for some living person, but in vain. After an hour and a half had elapsed, an outcaste girl, a stranger to me, arrived on the scene, like darkness facing the moon. This girl, who had a dark skin and dark vesture, approached me with some delectable food in her hand. Unable to control my hunger, I entreated of her: “Oh swan-like one, please bestow on me that which thou hast in thy hand.” But I paid the penalty of all those poverty-stricken persons who go and beg of another in haste owing to their extreme hunger; for this girl did not vouchsafe to give it to me, as if I had not earned the right to get it through my Tapas, and took to her heels. Then ensued a chase in which I hunted her throughout the forest and after reaching her, piteously complained to her of my extreme hunger. To which the dark-skinned one replied: “I am an outcaste and it is not meet that thou shouldst taste the food I have. But if thou deignest to do so, thou shouldst first promise to wed me in my own place before my parents and live with me there. If so, I

will give thee this very instant what I have in my hand." To this I nodded assent reluctantly; and instantly she handed to me with great avidity what she had. After having partaken of a half of this nectar and tasted the juice of Jambū fruits to quench my thirst, my appetite was appeased. Then she took my hand, saying that I was a good person and led me to her parents, like the subtle body of a person conducted to hell. There she asked leave of her father to destow her hand upon this lover of hers. Finding no obstacles in the way on the part of the father, we left this forest laden with ghosts, and were taken to the village, redolent with the stench of flesh, by this dark Nica (outcaste) of a father who was like Yama's servant. In order to celebrate the marriage, he killed for flesh the bodies of monkeys, horses, fowl, crows and pigs and dried them like festoons on strings of nerves. Birds pounced upon them as they were exposed. Swarms of flies buzzed around on the pieces of flesh held by boys in their hands as they trudged along on the streets. In this hamlet splattered with blood and bones, a shed was erected with plantian trees as the four pillars.

Then with great hilarity, the marriage festivities began. The old hunch-backed grandmother of the house surveyed, through her large fleshy eyes, me, the son-in-law, and was greatly pleased with the choice. All the outcastes having assembled on the occasion, the drums were caused to be beaten. Toddy and flesh were distributed freely to the gathering.

Like sin which produces a Yātanā-śarīra (body of suffering) for men in hell, the Nica father gave me this girl in marriage. As usual with these low-caste people, the wedding lasted seven days.¹ After it was over, I passed eight months in the company of this lady who was as if all sins had solidified themselves in her. Through my union with her of budding breasts, a child was born like pain, the offspring of grim accidents. The complexion of this child was like that of a burnt brand and it grew up like the minds of the ignorant. Then in the course of three years she bore me a son, like birth generating ignorance. Then again another child was born of her through me, as if human miseries arising out of excessive desires incarnated in the form of that child. With this spouse and children I lived for a long time. Then, what with the cares of Saṃsāra and the pain my family and I had to undergo, my body became old and emaciated. And when I was thus enfeebled, the earth near the base of the Vindhya mountains became parched through drought and all there suffered through hunger. Verdant foliage of trees with long branches, creepers, grass, etc. were not to be seen. The air was saturated with masses of dust produced by heat. Then one by one my new relatives began to perish and a few that were alive fled to foreign dominions.

‘In order to survive, my wife and I abandoned the country under the scorching rays of the sun,

¹ Among Brahmins it lasts generally four days.

myself bearing two of my children on my shoulders and the third on my head. Having crossed our country, I saw a big palmyra tree under the shade of which I dismounted my children and rested myself along with my wife for some time, like one who, having crossed the terrible hell of vicious deeds, enjoys the happiness resulting from his past good deeds. There my wife expired in the very embrace of her children, having become weary through age and the efforts of long travel under the tropical sun, though to all appearances she lay like one in faint or sleep. At this, my heart gave way. One of my younger children mounted on my lap without a wink of sleep, and weeping incessantly, with his eyes constantly trickling with tears, demanded of me flesh and blood to eat, as he was unable to endure his hunger. Unable to find any means to appease the hunger of the child who was so distressed in my very presence, I was like a lifeless carcase ignorant of what to do. The piteous and incessant weeping of my boy broke my heart and misgivings about his life rose to a certainty in me. Therefore I resolved to put an end to my life, by rearing a great forest fire and falling into it. I approached the flames to throw myself into it, when I tumbled down from the throne here and woke up to see you, courtiers, lifting me up and pronouncing the words *jaya* (victory to thee), *jaya* and to hear the sound of musical instruments. So I find myself here not as a Nīca but as the king Lavaṇa. I lost my senses only through the fascinating power of this Siddha.

Now I have learnt that the ego of man has different states of experience to undergo.' Whilst he was saying this, the ministers in the court inquired who this Siddha was, whereupon Śāmbarika, the Siddha, disappeared from view in the twinkling of an eye.

Vasiṣṭha continued: This personage is no other than the Divine Māyā, sent here to illustrate clearly the fact that this universe is the mind itself. Know also, Oh valiant prince, that the wise say that the self-light of Parabrahman alone is, appearing as mind or this universe.

9. THE CONCLUSION OF UTPATTI PRAKARAṆA

Summary—This chapter summarizes all that was said in the previous stories as to the origin of the mind and the universe.

It is the actions of the mind that are truly termed Karman-s. True liberation results from the disenthralment of the mind. Those who have freed themselves from the fluctuation of their mind come into possession of the supreme Niṣṭhā (meditation). Should the mind be purged of its impurities, then it will become as still as the milky ocean undisturbed by the churning of Mandara hills; and our Saṃsāric delusion attended by birth and death will be destroyed.

Muni Vasiṣṭha continued: The poisonous tree that is great Māyā's illusion flourishes more and more

out of the seed of the mind's modifications, full of Saṃkalpa, in the soil of the variegated enjoyments of the world. The panacea prescribed by the wise for the removal of the diseases of the mind can be found very easily by the mind alone. Now hearken to what I say. Those who, without longing for objects, avoid them, can be termed the subjugators of their Manas (mind). Those who do not develop the Vairāgya inhering in one's self, are at best vermin in human shape. If the mind be divested of the Saṃkalpa of 'I', then through meditation on Ātman, after being initiated by a Guru and having known the real significance of the Veda-s declared by the Lord, the mind can be turned back from pain, ceasing to wander outwardly, and it can be made happy. Like one iron shaping another iron, the pure mind of a person which makes efforts on the virtuous path should correct and mould his impure mind. To lovers of Mokṣa in whom the invincible desires take a tangible shape and who try to win their way to liberation through their own efforts, the easy abandonment of the restless activities of the mind is itself the transcendental path and they then feel as if a great load were taken off their heads. No other path is truly beneficial.

If the mind which flits from one object to another is slain with the sword of non-Saṃkalpa, then the self-shining Principle, which shines as the All and permeates all, will be cognized. May you, Oh Rāma, tread this path and destroy, through your Jñāna, the much-longed-for mind; and after attaining

Ātma-jñāna through renunciation, devoid of Saṃkalpa-s and Vikalpa-s, know your Reality wherein the mind is merged. May you rest in the self-existent Brahmic state which is neither Sat nor Asat, after developing with effort Śravaṇa, etc. and destroying the mind. It is only through dauntless energy that the wealth of Mokṣa can be acquired. With the destruction of the mind,¹ the three periods of time vanish into nothing. If all objects which have an enchanting appearance become unattractive and appear the very reverse of what they seemed, then is the mind destroyed.

If doubts vanish when spiritual knowledge arises through the meditation on Jñāna in the heart, then the mind will be destroyed. All afflictions will cease with its destruction. Differentiations of that or this person, or 'I' or 'thou', or 'that' or 'this' object are, or pertain to, mind only. May you put an end to that mind with the sword of Abhāvanā (non-thought). Like thick clouds which are dispersed by stormy gales, the mind is absorbed into Cit (absolute Consciousness) through the extinction of Kalpanā-s (thoughts). If one's mind is destroyed, then one does not suffer from pain even though, as at the end of a Kalpa, the fierce winds, the Pralaya ocean with its furious, seething waves and the twelve Āditya-s (suns), who melt even the earth with

¹ The destruction of the mind does not mean annihilation of the self; but the Vedāntin-s divide the mind into the higher and the lower, of which the lower one leading to desires has to be destroyed.

their heat, should all combine together to play simultaneous havoc on the surface of the earth? If the (lower) mind is annihilated through the (higher) mind, then one will become his own Self and perennial happiness will flow therefrom. Then will you have acquired Mokṣa and reached the Brahmic state unshakable in bliss. The enemy of Ātman is this impure mind, which is replete with delusion and hosts of thoughts. Lest this enemy which is mind spoil you in diverse ways through the enjoyment of the many pleasures of this world, slay it to obtain ultimate contentment, which will pave the way towards spiritual illumination. Then will the immaculate, tranquil and all-full Bhāva (state), precious to the wise, never be affected by the idea of 'I'. Through this all-full Bhāva, which is capable of neither increase nor diminution, the Brahmic state, conferring supremē bliss, is realized. It is indeed rare to find a mind that is not affected by fluctuation. Like heat inseparable from fire, the fluctuation which debases the mind is inseparable from it. And this fluctuating mind alone is this universe; devoid of fluctuation, the mind ceases to exist. It is this knowledge which constitutes Tapas without desire for fruit, the underlying meaning of all books on Ātma-jñāna and Mokṣa or the one Principle. The fluctuating power of the mind is called by several names such as Māyā and the impure Vāsanā-s. The flitting mind is the fluctuating Śakti itself. You should destroy this fluctuating potency of the mind through ceaseless Ātma-jñāna inquiry.

Supreme bliss will flow from the renunciation of much-longed-for paltry objects. The mind, which occupies an intermediate state between Brahman that ever is and the universe that is not, oscillates, gravitating towards the one or the other. This mind becomes of the nature of Jñāna through efforts towards spiritual direction; it becomes of the nature of the universe through Ajñāna. The mind assumes the shape of any object it concentrates upon. Therefore you should, through your Ātma-jñāna mind, avoid the mind which runs in the direction of objects; and progressing higher up, you should, without any despondency of heart, accumulate the wealth which leads towards that imperishable Supreme State. Like an emperor who brings under his sway all kings on earth, the vagrant mind should be brought under the perfect control of the non-fluctuating mind and then the latter reaches its own state which is the supreme one.

In this ocean of Saṃsāra, only those, who are aware of being whirled about in the maelstrom of life, gripped by the crocodiles of desire, find a safe asylum in the ship of their mind. Let not your heart give way under trials; but having destroyed the impure mind with the pure mind, befriend the latter and make your Ātman rest in its blissful state. Will your mind progress through anyone else? Certainly not. Whatever pain or impediments to progress arise in the mind, there at that very moment they should be crushed out of existence; then is the

destruction of Māyā accomplished. Having divested yourself of all longing for enjoyment and conceptions of heterogeneity, as well as of Bhāva (existence) and Abhāva (non-existence), may you enjoy bliss without the least stain. Should all longing for visible things cease; then such subjugation of the mind is itself the destruction of Ajñāna or the mind. Desire for objects is pain; non-desire is Nirvāṇic bliss. Such bliss is generated only through one's own efforts. The knowledge of the ignorant which makes them conceive the world to be real, while it is illusory and exists but in name, is dissipated when they cognize all things to be consciousness *per se*.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma queried: 'How can this ignorance, which fructifies out of Avidyā in this world, be effaced?' To which Vasiṣṭha of powerful Tapas replied: If the eternal Ātman is hurled on the slopes of the hills of rebirth, beset with the sharp thorns of excruciating pain, and if Māyā which is associated with the Ātman there be seen as real, then it is certain that no vision of Reality will arise. If, after the Avidyā of rebirth is crossed, the all-pervading, transcendent Reality should begin to illumine a person, then he will perceive objectively that desires are the form of Māyā and that the extinction of Māyā is Mokṣa. With the extinction of the base Saṃkalpa-s, there is the extinction of Avidyā. With the dawning of the sun of Jñāna in the heart, the gloom of Ajñāna is at once dispersed. •

Here Rāma interposed and said: 'Thou wert pleased to say that all visible things are only Māyā; also that Māyā will perish without any hindrance through Jñāna or Ātmic meditation. What is Ātman?'

To which Vasiṣṭha of immeasurable Tapas replied: It is the transcendental Jñāna of Brahman which does not manifest itself objectively in visible things; it is the Plenum, and the one that *is*, possessing no name. All things in the world that are pointed out as 'this' or 'that' are not other than the eternal Brahman, of the nature of Jñāna. The illusory, impure mind is not. Things such as birth and death in the three worlds are not really existent; nor are the six changes.¹ The non-dual, Absolute Consciousness which can be known by its pervading nature is alone existent. Out of that Jñānātman which is absolute, self-shining, imperishable, immaculate, all-pervading, impartite, and quiescent, and which, mingling with all objects, is yet unaffected by them, arose through its own power an intelligence generated through its desire for Saṃkalpa-s. This Jñāna, generating countless Saṃkalpa-s, permeates all. This intelligence constitutes the mind of Brahman itself. In this Brahman are infinite Śakti-s. In this fleeting mind, which pervades equally in all, arise the diverse supreme Śakti-s, like waves in water. This mind which arises through

¹ The six changes are: genesis, existence, alteration, growth, decay and destruction.

Samkalpa perishes through it like a flame which, though fanned by wind, is yet extinguished by the same. The non-cognition of oneself as Brahman which is the Laya (neutral) centre of all is bondage of the mind; the firm cognition of oneself as Brahman is Mokṣa. The conception of 'I', Ajñāna, pain, and the forms of bodies having limbs, etc. and the conduct of life in accordance therewith, generate desire and bondage; but if such thoughts arise in persons as 'I am not these inert objects, I am neither the flesh nor nerves, nor bones, etc.' and if they identify themselves with Brahman which transcends all bodies, then they disentangle themselves from the folds of Māyā and become the knowers of their own Self. The Māyā which arises through the identification of 'I' with bodies, etc. is gifted with reality only through the fancy of the ignorant, but to the wise this Māyā is non-existent. Like a minister obeying a king, the five organs of the body act in accordance with the dictates of the mind. Therefore you should, through your own pure mind and proper efforts, eradicate the Vāsanā-s of desire for objects. The Vāsanā-s which are generated through identification with sons, or wealth, or through the differences of 'I', 'he', 'thou', 'this' or 'that', wax more and more, like Indrajāla (magical tricks) which is as ephemeral as lightning. Having become the beneficent knower, may you abandon all thoughts of visible things. Why should you pine like the ignorant, bewildered by the illusions of son, etc. which are not your Self?

What is this body which is dull and inert? Who is that 'you' which on account of this body is drowned in pleasure and pain and is ever chafing without the least avail? Truly a wondrous riddle! You have not cognized these diverse things in their true state of unity. While the self-shining Brahman, which is non-dual and true, pervades everywhere, this painful and illusory Māyā, though uncreate, manifests itself. Like a crystal which, though tinged by the five colours, is unaffected by them, you should perform all actions and yet be untainted by desire. So said at length Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha.

Vālmīki said: 'Oh Bharadvāja, hearken to what passed between Śrī Rāma, replete with good qualities, and Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha.' Rāma remarked: 'This passes all belief. How is it possible for the universe to be afflicted with manifold pain through this illusory Māyā? Can a series of hills be bound and crushed by the filament of a lotus? I would rather believe that a straw assumes the density of a diamond rather than that the universe becomes manifest in its present shape through the power of Māyā which is unreal. Still another doubt flashes across my brain. Whence the pain of King Lavaṇa previously mentioned by thee?'

Lavaṇa's mental Yajña—Vasiṣṭha answered his queries thus: As Lavaṇa performed actions with an undefiled mind, his body did not share in their fruits. This king was one day spending his time alone in his pleasure garden and fell into the following profound reverie.

He thought of performing mentally the Rājasūya-yajña¹ which his ancestor, Hariścandra, had done with his physical body. Through his Saṃkalpa, he willed the existence of ploughs and other implements and the things necessary for Yajña and entering the place of Yajña according to Vedic procedure, appointed and worshipped Muni-s. Then kindling a large fire and invoking the Deva-s through the chanting of Vedic Mantra-s, he worshipped Deva-s, Tapasvin-s and Brahmins for one year by feeding them and justly distributing to them all his wealth. He thus concluded his Yajña and awoke from his intense reverie to find the night approaching. You should gather from this episode that it is the mind alone which brings pleasure or pain itself and enjoys them through its strong inclination towards any particular object.

I will here narrate to you information about Śāmbarika, the Siddha. When he appeared before King Lavaṇa who was seated in a conclave of courtiers, he deluded the king with his Indrajāla and then disappeared. I was one of the group and witnessed all these things. Being questioned as to the mysterious disappearance of this Siddha by the powerful king and courtiers as well as others, I dived into my heart to probe into the three periods of time and gave the following explanation. Oh Rāma, as it is a rule that all persons who perform Rājasūya-yajña have to

¹ This is a sacrifice made by emperors as a mark of their undisputed sovereignty over the whole world.

undergo intense suffering for a period of twelve years, Lavaṇa had to suffer after the completion of his mental Yajña. So it was that Indra sent a messenger of his to afflict the king with pain. This celestial messenger assumed the guise of a Siddha, meted out pain to the king and departed to his realm.

Jñāna and Ajñāna—Oh Rāmacandra, there are two states, Jñāna and Ajñāna. Each of them is septenary in its nature. They are mutually interdependent. Infinite are the subdivisions which overlap one another in the septenary¹ divisions of both these states. The Jñāna path which enables one to cognize the one Reality is Mokṣa, whereas the other, which makes men forget the one Reality and identify 'I' with their bodies, etc. is bondage.

The following are the leading characteristics that differentiate a person who has cognized the one Reality from another who has not. Those who are immovably fixed in the Jñāna Reality, the eternal, absolute Sat, have conquered their passions, anger and delusion, but those who are not truly illumined are the slaves of their passions, etc. The intelligence of one who dotes on the body and its organs leads him away from the one Reality. The mind which makes one swerve from the path of Ātmic Reality is Moha or delusion. There is really no other Moha, in all the three periods. (The one) Reality can be defined to be that

¹ This corroborates the Theosophical doctrine of the septenary division.

Jñāna which exists without Saṃkalpa. This Jñāna is devoid of fancies and fluctuation and of the Vṛtti-jñāna of the dream (Svapna) state or the Ajñāna of the dreamless, sleeping (Suṣupti) state. That non-fluctuating certainty of mind, which is of the nature of bliss, in which all the conceptions identifying 'I' with the body, as well as all differences between Jīvātman and Paramātman are annihilated, is the true nature of Ātma-jñāna.

The seven Ajñāna States—Now listen to a detailed explanation of the seven states of Ajñāna, of which I spoke before. They are called Bindu-jāgrat, Jāgrat, Mahā-jāgrat, Jāgrat-svapna, Svapna, Svapna-jāgrat and Suṣupti. These seven different states interpenetrate one another and receive different appellations. As the one Jñāna, which is nameless and taintless, is the substratum and the generating Bindu (the seed) of all that passes under the names and actions of Manas, Jīva, etc. evolving and flourishing, the first state is called Bindu-jāgrat. This is the first or primary state. After the incipient manifestation of Jīva, the feeble conception of the differences of 'I and he' and 'mine and thine' which arise, not having existed before, is the second or upper Jāgrat state. The third state is induced, when, after repeated births, conceptions of the heterogeneity of man and the universe materialize in the individual. Jāgrat-svapna is that state in which the mind holds undisputed sovereignty over the things of the world in the Jāgrat state through previous effects, and overpowered by

such objects, whether seen or unseen before, revels in them. This Svapna state is enjoyed in the Jāgrat or waking state and is of various kinds, through the experience of various delusions, like the delusion of water in a mirage, silver in mother-of-pearl, two moons, etc. Then in the fifth state of pure Svapna, a review is made of the innumerable events which one passes through in a moment as if in a dream or reverie, and the individual remembers them in his normal Jāgrat state. The sixth state is Svapna-jāgrat in which one in the waking state, in trying to recollect things long past, has that Svapna consciousness, which makes past things appear clearly in recollection in the present, not as in Svapna but as in the Jāgrat state. After crossing these six states, a Jīva reaches the Susupti state in which its intelligence finds all the Avasthā-s (states) to be beset with pain. All the worlds seem to be generated out of and perish in the mist of Māyā in these Avasthā-s or states. These seven states of Ajñāna have countless ramifications, each being divided a hundredfold. Thus are the seven Ajñāna-bhūmikā-s (states).

The seven Jñāna States—Now hear of the seven Jñāna-bhūmikā-s, which are said to have infinite divisions. I prefer to classify them under a septenary head. The cognition of the real nature of these Jñāna states is Ātma-jñāna. Their goal is the imperishable Nirvāṇa. The seven stages are: Śubhecchā (spiritual longing for the bliss spoken of in the Veda-s); Vicāraṇā (inquiry therein), Tanumānāsī

(the melting of the mind in inquiry), Sattvāpatti (the passage of the mind in Truth), Asaṃśakti (being without Saṃkalpa), Padārtha-bhāvanā (knowledge of Truth), and Turya. Persons who have known these states are never sunk in delusion. That desire which arises in one to enjoy directly the Jñāna-essence through the path of indifference to objects after a study of Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s and association with the knowers of Brahman is Śubhecchā. The second or Vicāraṇā is the mastery of the good qualities of the wise and of Ātmic contemplation, with the rise of spiritual desires. When after these two states are fully developed in him, the aspirant abandons the natural desires and his mind is concentrated on one object at its will, then the mind is rendered fine (Tanu) and the third stage is reached. All desires being eliminated from the mind by the above three processes, Tattva-jñāna is developed and this is the fourth state of Truth. Beyond these is the fifth state when he frees himself from Saṃkalpa-s by the blissful enjoyment of true Jñāna without association with objects. When these five states are fully realized, he is lost in the bliss of Ātma-jñāna and then he has no affinity for objects. After the ripening of these five states and the development of quiescence through merging into one's own self, all perception of objects, external and internal, is lost and the person, if at all he has any perception of objects, has it only through external compulsion. This is the state called Padārtha-bhāvanā. Then the Turya, the seventh state, is reached

when, having rendered objective the hitherto latent Ātma-jñāna, he firmly stays in his own Self, having completely divested himself of all conceptions of heterogeneity which arise through his experiences on earth. This is the spiritual path of the perfected Jīvan-mukta-s. Above this Turya state of Jīvan-mukta-s, is the Turyātīta¹ state of Vidcha-mukta-s. This state is one that can be attained only by those Mahātman-s (great souls) who have known their Self through Ātma-jñāna.

Jīvan-mukta-s who have reached this imperishable Turya state are not affected by the pairs of opposites. They perform Karman-s at the instance of their disciples or others, to maintain their body; and like a person in a reverie or just awake after sleep, they are not the actors of their present Karman-s, though performing them, and enjoy Nirvāṇic bliss. These Jñāna-bhūmikā-s can be cognized only by those who have fully developed Jñāna. There is no doubt that if a person passes these seven states, he becomes emancipated whether he animates the body of a beast full of Ajñāna, whether he conforms to worldly observances or not, whether he is associated with a body or dies.

Tattva-jñāna is the release from the trammels of one's own mind. Such a release alone leads to the attainment of Mokṣa. If the illusions of the world are considered as unreal as a mirage in a desert, then the

¹ The state beyond the fourth.

Ajñāna in the man will end. If this Avidyā or ignorance be considered unreal then it will be annihilated. Those transcendently holy personages who have cognized all the true Jñāna states through Samādhi, which leads to the realization of their own Ātman, truly deserve the worship and meditation of all. Those who have subjugated their longstanding foes which are the sensual organs and have reached thereby the supreme state in which they are revered by all, and who regard as insignificant the position of even Devendra and emperors, are the knowers of these seven states. But those who have not attained these septenary states are drowned in the ocean of births. The proper means to subjugate the mind is Jñāna or the development of spiritual wisdom. It happens only through the path of these Jñāna-bhūmikā-s, without whose aid the noble Brahmic state can never be attained. That is one, without destruction, name, highness or lowness, being or non-being, beginning or end, affinities, positive or negative (attributes), and diversity; it is above the reach of Maṇas and speech; the bliss of bliss and the Plenum of all, free of all desires. This is that Brahman which you can reach through the septenary Bhūmikā-s.

Now listen, Oh Rāma, to the marvellous effects of Māyā. After the great king Lavaṇa had recovered from his trance, he saw, through the mirror of mind, the forests on the slopes of the Vindhya mountains, and consulted his courtiers as to whether it was possible for him to go and see those sites with his physical vision

and witness, if true, the events enacted therein; and being resolved upon trying the experiment, he started with his retinue towards the south and came in sight of the Vindhya hills, like a king bent upon extending his conquests in all directions. He roved about in all the quarters except the North, but in vain. All at once (in the northern direction), he saw the forest he had lived in formerly, as if his thoughts had taken a tangible form.

Scrutinizing the scene, he observed the several places and towns in the forest he had passed through as a Nīca (outcaste), which were like the city of Yama. To his great surprise, the king of kings observed, without exception, all the huts of Nīca-s of both sexes who were tenanted there then; and his heart began to give way under the grief caused by his old associations. At this juncture, a troop of old Nīca women turned up on the spot, full of sorrow, their eyes trickling with tears, and their bodies emaciated to the last degree. One of the group, unable to overcome her grief, opened her mouth wide and, gasping, gave vent to a long and loud wail, recounting the incidents connected with her children and others who had died previously: ‘ Oh my darlings, who have forsaken my lap and embrace only to perish in some foreign land, whither have you gone through your bad Karman-s? How distressed will you be at the sight of strangers’ faces? Oh my daughter, my daughter, when will you return to alleviate the scorching fire of my grief with the cool embrace of your arms decked with scarlet garlands. Oh my

son-in-law king, who came to us through our previous Tapas, like a treasure newly discovered, and led to the hymeneal altar my daughter, after having abandoned your harem containing ladies resembling Lakṣmī, have you forgotten us? Will you again present yourself before us with your moon-like face on this very spot? Or are you estranged from us because of paltry, venial offences committed by my daughter? Being caught in the snare of Karman-s in the great ocean of births, you abandoned your regality, accepted my daughter's hand and degraded yourself, a lord of men, into the most abject condition of an outcaste through such an alliance. Our rebirths flash like lightning and are as impermanent. Hard indeed are the decrees of destiny.' So saying, she wailed more and more.

The king, having heard her weep, told his handmaidens to go and pacify the old woman and bring her. When the old woman approached him, he accosted her thus: 'Who are you? Who is your daughter? And who are your children? Relate to me all without omitting any incident.' At which she replied: 'In this hamlet of pariahs lived an outcaste who was my lord. Through him, I begat a daughter. She lived as the wife of a king who came to this forest like another Devendra. Through her good fortune of a long time, she bore him three children and lived happily; to make amends for it, the fate became perverse and my children were subjected to misfortunes and died. After my daughter and others had lived happily for a long time, the clouds became relentless

and shed not a drop of water; there was a drought throughout the land and the outcastes fled in all directions and lay dead in piles of carcasses, black as Yama. We have survived all these shocks only to be alone and to suffer all the more.' Whereupon the king looked at his ministers with great wonder, and ordered them to furnish the Nīca women with necessary things, relieve them of their distress and conduct them to his kingdom. Having returned to his city, he reflected over the situation and becoming convinced of the seemingly real nature of the universe created by the potent power of Māyā, he sought initiation into the mysteries of Brahman at our hands and attained quiescence. Oh Rāmacandra of rare bounty, this great Māyā generates such delusions as are uncrossable. Through the power of Māyā, Sat appears as Asat and *vice versa*:

So said Vasiṣṭha when Rāma questioned him thus: 'Oh Guru of my race, how came the things enacted in the regions of the perturbed mind to objectivize themselves in the physical world?' To which the Ṛṣi replied: You will be able to understand better the heterogeneous manifestations of Māyā later on, through the story of Gādhi, wherein Māyā is shown as producing diverse objects. Like the coincidence of a palmyra fruit falling at the time of the perching of a crow on the tree, according to the wise, worldly actions appear to coincide through Vāsanā-s of the mind. Therefore King Lavaṇa took as true, on the subsequent day, the illusion of being an outcaste, etc. which

Śāmbarika, the Siddha, imposed on him the previous day through his Indrajāla. The Caṇḍāla-s living on the slopes of the hills mistook that illusion which was wrought on the king's brain in his Jāgrat-svapna state to be real through their own mind. Now what happened was this: That which dawned on the king's mind (as Jāgrat-svapna) was reflected on those of the Caṇḍāla-s as Jāgrat (or waking reality); and what happened among the Caṇḍāla-s again reflected itself on the mind of the king (as the same Jāgrat reality). If this is the work of Māyā, who will be able to gauge its tremendous powers? It is only to Jñāna light that all visible Māyāvic objects owe their existence in this world. Likewise all the objects which are observed through the five organs would be non-existent except for Jñāna. Jñānātman occupies a state intermediate between the knower and the known. Hence Mokṣa may be said to be that state in which objects, their knower, and knowledge are not found, but which is yet the source of all three. May you be ever impartite in that Cidānanda wherein are unified 'That', the Brahman and 'thou', the Kūṭastha, which is the neutral state of mind when it passes from one object to another and which is without name, intelligence or inertness. May you rest in your Self in an illumined state, having understood thoroughly your subtle mind, and having eradicated all the concepts of your mind which make you falsely believe yourself to be under the trammels of Saṃsāra. .

Now, Rāma, you should rend asunder, through arduous effort, the long rope of Vāsanā-s which tie the vessels which are men who are swung about as if on waterlifts. All the universes with their heterogeneity, though really Ātma-jñāna, shine as worlds only through our illusory mind, like the blueness in the sky which is in fact non-existent. If with the extinction of pain-producing Saṃkalpa, the mind is also destroyed, then the thick frost of Moha (delusion), affecting us from remote periods, will dissipate itself. Then like an unobscured sky in the autumnal season, Brahman alone will shine, resplendent, blissful, imperishable, non-dual, formless and without birth or death.

IV. STHITI PRAKARAṆA

1. THE STORY OF ŚUKRA

Summary—Having described the Ajñāna stages in the previous Prakaraṇa to show that the play of the mind, arising out of Caitanya, constitutes this universe, as also the seven Jñāna stages which free one from that universe, the author begins this Sthiti Prakaraṇa (the chapter on preservation) with five stories to show that this universe shines as Caitanya only, even after its rise, and during preservation.

Without the aid of a painter or a canvas or any other materials of painting, the picture of the universe appears depicted on the stainless Cidākāśa. Having appeared, it is ever seeing itself (as there is nothing else for it to see). Therefore the universe is like a Svapna in Jāgrat and not like the state of Suṣupti (sleep), when all conceptions cease to be. The reflections of all the universes in the non-differentiated Ātma-jñāna, which is the witness, all-full, immaculate and all-pervading, is like that of the image in a glass. They shine through Brahman without any relationship of cause and effect. Their true nature can be said to be that of the reflection. May you, Oh Rāma, through endeavour, contemplate, as one, the eternal Brahman which is partless, the Ātman (Self) of all,

the Jñāna and the all-pervading Cidākāśa. Should you attain such certitude of mind, it will be free of all fluctuations and become of the nature of Ātma-jñāna itself. Just as a stone may have many figures carved on it, so in the one Brahman the worlds manifest themselves. Since there is no cause or effect associated with Brahman which could constitute a second, there is really nothing which could be called the universe. Ātma-jñāna alone is. All the universes are but reflections in the one certitude of Brahman.

To illustrate the truth of my remarks, I will tell you the story of Śukrācārya. In days of old, Muni Bhṛgu was engaged in the performance of Tapas on the slope of the lofty and ancient mountain called Mandaragiri. His son, who rejoiced by the name of Śukra, was a remarkably intelligent person and shone like the moon. He never strayed from the feet of his father. He was in that great Laya (neutral) state which is intermediate between the incomparable Cit and the Acit state.¹ While he was thus in an intermediate state, unaware of them both, like King Triśaṅku² who was left in the middle of the sky without being able to go higher up or come lower down to

¹ The state of Brahman is said to be that neutral state which is between the intelligence (Cit) and matter (Acit) of the universe.

² This king sought of Vasiṣṭha to be transported physically to the heavens, but he was refused; hence he requested Viśvāmitra who, unable to take him up to Svarga, left him in the Antarikṣa, the intermediate space.

the earth, his father was in Nirvikalpa Samādhi. Then the son, who never parted from his father, remained separate and looked up through the pure Ākāśa where he saw a Deva (celestial) lady approaching him. Her graceful tresses were decked with Mandāra flowers, the odour of which was gently wafted by the zephyrs as she moved along with the gait of a she-elephant. Having seen her, he became enamoured; then closing his eyelids, he revelled in the vast fields of the mental region, through the overpowering desire in him. Coming to the conclusion that she belonged to Devaloka, he resolved upon going there, when lo! he saw that Loka before him and Indra, the lord of Deva-s, shining in it like lightning in a cloud and seated on his beautiful throne, eulogized by the Deva-s. Thereupon, formal courtesies were exchanged between Śukra and Indra. Whilst Śukra was living there amidst luxurious enjoyments, the same Deva lady with budding breasts, whom he had seen before, emerged out of a group of damsels and presented herself before him. The eyes of Śukra gleamed with inexpressible delight at the sight of this fair creature who, in turn, returned his glances. While thus their hearts and eyes were melting together with love, Śukra, who never failed to bring into existence whatever he willed through his Saṃkalpa, willed that darkness should envelop space. When intense gloom surrounded them as at the end of a Kalpa, all who were there fled to other quarters, panic-struck, and thus left alone the pair. Then the celestial maiden was embraced by Śukra

beneath the foliage of the beautiful Kalpa tree of Paradise. Thus the pair passed eight Catur-yuga-s¹ in sensual enjoyment without any obstacle or hindrance. Then fearing lest all his Dharma-s should be wasted thus, Śukra descended to Bhūloka (earth) from Devaloka. On earth he forgot all about his own reality. In his descent from Indraloka, Śukra's Jīva mingled itself with the soft rays of the full moon and became the cool snow. This snow falling on paddy fields converted itself into paddy. The rice growing from the fertile stalks was cooked and eaten by a Brahmin of Daśārṇa country and was converted into the seminal fluid in him. Śukra, who was thus in the form of sperm in the Brahmin, ultimately emerged as his son² out of the womb of his spouse. Associating himself with Tapasvin-s, he performed austere Tapas for the period of a Manvantara, in a forest encircling the golden mountains of Mahāmeru. Then Śukra had a human offspring through a hind. Through the Ajñāna (ignorance) in which he was enslaved by the material things of the world, and through his fond love for his offspring, he fell from his true state. Passing through a series of incarnations, subject to births and deaths generated by his illusory Vāsanā-s, he at last incarnated

¹ Catur-yuga-s are otherwise called Mahāyuga-s. Each Mahāyuga is composed of the four Yugas-s, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.

² This shows clearly that Śukra stands for the egos of human beings. Here the general pilgrimage and incarnation of egos are described.

in the body of a Tapasvin, as the son of a Muni on the banks of the holy Gaṅgā.

Let me turn to the former body of Śukra which was lying in a trance by the side of his father and from which life had departed. The rays of the sun aided by the wind had reduced it to a mere skeleton. But it remained intact without being assailed and destroyed by birds or beasts, as they were instinctively afraid of doing away with it in the presence of Bhṛgu. Having passed many divine years in Nirvikalpa Samādhi, Bhṛgu opened his eyes only to find the shrivelled carcase of his son, displaying the bones which looked the very symbol of poverty and misfortune. Then this Muni of rare Tapas and renunciation became disconsolate in mind at finding sparrows chirping in the nine avenues of his son's body and frogs squatting and playing within his stomach. Without trying to delve into the cause of all these occurrences, and seeing that his beloved son was dead, with flaming anger as of Rudra riding on his bull, he began to curse Yama, in order to destroy him. Yama, having assumed a body composed of the five elements, appeared before the disconsolate Bhṛgu with six faces, six hands, sword, noose, pendants and the diamond-hilted armour of protection, and surrounded by his enormous hosts.

Then this all-devourer, in order to explain the real situation to the Muni, softly addressed him thus: 'We who are only administering the laws of Īśvara cannot but extol you who have immeasurable and noble

Tapas. Therefore it is not meet that you should spoil your Tapas through violent anger. Even the fire at the period of Pralaya cannot consume me, much less your words. Many are the Rudrā-s and Viṣṇu-s who have fallen a prey to me, having been enmeshed in the snares of Saṃsāra. There is none in this world of pain who has ever vanquished me. All come into my jaws. It is the unalterable and eternal decree of Parameśvara and not myself that I should be the cause of the destruction of all created lives. This law ever endures. In the immaculate Jñāna introvision, the differences of actor and enjoyer are lost, but in the Ajñāna vision of people, they exist in concrete shape. All creatures arising through the force of their Karman are born through Saṃkalpa and perish at the end of a Kalpa. Are you justified in cursing me with anger, without trying to understand the present situation of your son brought about by his own Saṃkalpa? Attend to what I say. It is the mind alone that is Ātman and nought else. The mind's acts (and not the bodily acts) are alone true acts. Through its life in this world, it is called Jīva. It is called Buddhi, through its certainty of knowledge. It is called Ahaṃkāra when the conceptions of "I" and "mine" assert themselves, with the signs of anger, etc. While you were engaged in Nirvikalpa Samādhi, your son abandoned his fleshly tabernacle because of intense desire and mentally joined, in the Ākāśa, a Deva lady by the name of Viśvāci. Then he incarnated on earth in the country of Daśārṇa as the

son of a Brahmin. He went the round of lives, as a king in the country of Kosala, a hunter in an extensive forest, a swan on the banks of the Gaṅgā, a great king in the solar family ruling over the Pauṇḍra country, and the Guru of the solar race in Sālva country. For the long period of a Kalpa, he passed his life as the king of Vidyādhara-s; he was the intelligent son of a Muni of great Tapas; a chieftain in the Sauvīra country where there are large tanks with fishes playing in them; the Guru of Śaivites (followers of Śiva) in another country; a bamboo cluster elsewhere, full of fragrance; a stag in a decayed forest; a fierce boa-constrictor in a spacious jungle. Thus did he pass through various wombs, going through births high or low, with a clouded mind under the influence of Vāsanā-s; he was at last born as the incomparable and true son of a Ṛṣi on the banks of the Gaṅgā. In this birth, he obtained mastery over his weak foes, the illusory organs, and wearing matted locks, etc. and passing by the name of Vāsudeva, has been engaged in Tapas for the last 800 years. If you, through your love for your son, wish to behold the series of illusory births which flitted across your son's mind like a dream, you can do so now through your divine vision.' So said Yama, when the Muni of great culture observed in a moment, through his introvision, the events of his son's lives reflected in the transparent mirror of the pure mind, which in its turn manifested itself out of the transcendent Jñāna-light. Then this desireless Muni returned from his trance (at the end of which he was by the river Gaṅgā)

to his normal state by entering and animating his bodily tenement lying in Mandaragiri. Greatly astonished, he asked of Yama pardon for his conduct and addressed him thus: 'Oh omniscient Kāla (Time), thou art the foremost dispenser of Law; thou art the only one thoroughly acquainted with the three periods of time. Persons like myself are mere novices in Brahma-jñāna.'

Then Yama took Bhṛgu's hand and led him out of the caves of Mandaragiri to where the divine river Gaṅgā flowed. There the Ṛṣi saw, with intense delight, his son who passed under the name of Vāsudeva: So willed Yama. Again when Yama willed that Vāsudeva should come back from his Samādhi state and see them, the latter did so. Thereupon all the three seated themselves upon a stone with true love towards one another. Then the son remarked: 'By your presence here, I have been cleansed of the delusions arising from stainless Tapas, Yajña-s and wealth. Even copious draughts of nectar would not yield such bliss as your advent here.' Thereupon Bhṛgu blessed him saying: 'May bliss ever increase in thee, mayest thou possess full Jñāna, and may Ajñāna fly from thee.' Then closing his mutilated ¹ eyes, Śukra reviewed his past lives through his Jñāna-vision. Thus was he freed in a moment from future births.

¹ The eyes of Śukra were mutilated at the time when Bali acceded to the request of Viṣṇu in the form of a Dwarf.

After observing all this with his divine vision, Śukra remarked in wonder: 'Passing strange is it that the dire delusion called Prakṛti (matter), having transformed itself into this universe, flourished in my mind. I have known all that should be known, I have seen all that should be seen. I have been released from the pain incidental to many rebirths. I have been wandering for a long time. Finally, I have attained Ātma-jñāna, the good effect of all. Therefore, sirs, let us hereafter betake ourselves to the Mandara hills and see the body lying there. Do not think that I have either attachment or hatred towards objects, although my intention is to visit my skeleton.' After Vāsudeva spoke thus, the three started for the Mandara hills and reached it in a moment. When they, who knew the extent and true nature of the whole universe, arrived at the spot, Vāsudeva surveyed with unmingled pleasure his former body as the son of Bhṛgu and then, casting his glance at his father, asked him whether it was that bony body which he had reared up as his son. Continuing, he said: 'Oh father, this body you brought up before with great happiness, being without pain, desire, doubt, or sense of gain or loss, was in a state of immutable bliss with mind destroyed. Is there any happiness to Jīva-s (egos) other than in the state when the mind is destroyed? It is only through my rare Tapas that I have been able to witness the miracles I have seen here.'

So said Vāsudeva, when Kāla (Yama) interrupted him with these words: 'Now sir, enter this body like

a king his city, and there administer the duties of a Guru¹ to the Asura-s who need correction.' Having given these orders to Śukra, he bid farewell to them both and instantly disappeared from the spot where he was standing. At his departure, the father and son were greatly grieved. But Śukra of great prowess abandoned the conception of Vāsudeva and then entered his former body according to Yama's injunction. Thereupon the matchless Bhṛgu bathed, with the waters in his bowl purified by Vedic Mantras-s, the body of Śukra into which the son had to enter through the force of fate. With this ablution, the Nāḍi-s (nerves) in his body allowed the Prāṇa to circulate freely over them. Then Bhārgava (the son of Bhṛgu) rose up in that body and having paid due respects to his father, stood by him. So did the father and son utterly rout the enemy which is the impure mind and pass their days in the Jīvan-mukti state, like a waveless ocean. Thus related Vasiṣṭha of great Jñāna and erudition to Rāma of true grace.

2. THE STORY OF DĀMA, VYĀLA AND KĀṬA

Summary—Having shown that the universe shines as Ātma-saṃkalpa, the author points out in this story that the conception of the reality of the universe increases with contemplation on non-Ātman.

¹ If Asura means egos, Śukra is their Guru.

The true nature of 'That' will dawn with spontaneous bliss in the hearts of only those who are engaged in ceaseless inquiry into Ātman; who are free from the base thoughts of the mind or Saṃkalpa; who are ever in the enjoyment of spiritual bliss; who have known the true nature of Saccidānanda which destroys the unreality, inertness and the pain caused by visible objects, which are the result of Saṃkalpa; who have cognized their Ātmic Reality, the seer, after freeing themselves of all conceptions of non-Ātman, the non-seer; who, though alive, enjoy the Jāgrat (waking) state in the supreme Tattva of Jñāna; who are out of the path leading to rebirths; who have cut themselves asunder from all Vāsanā-s of good or evil, through their fully developed sense of desirelessness; and who after destroying the snares of Vāsanā-s, free their minds from bondage. In such minds only will there be the illumination of true Jñāna, like muddy water cleared of its sediments by clearing-nuts (*katakabīja*). It is only when the mind, divested of all its desires, is indifferent to pleasure and pain and is not attracted by any objects, that it will be rendered pure and free from the grip of the great delusion, like a bird freed from its cage and flying freely in the Ākāśa. Then it will be the Plenum itself and will shine like a fullmoon. Persons in this state bless and aid even the Trimūrti-s (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra), the highest of deities.

The Supreme Principle should be attained through earnest inquiry. The delusion of rebirth envelops us like

a mist, so long as there is no serious inquiry about the nature of the universe and of the 'I' in man. Those only are the cognizers of Tattva (Reality) who perceive objectively, through their steady Jñāna-vision, that the countless universes and egos of men are no other than the light of the imperishable Jñāna. Those only are the cognizers of Tattva who perceive objectively that it is the immeasurable Ātma-jñāna alone which manifests itself as various potencies and yet is non-dual (in its innate condition) and which is the latency of all possible ideation. Those only are the cognizers of Tattva who perceive that Brahman alone is, being the Laya centre between being and non-being, and that there is nothing which is apart from It, such as the knower of 'I' or the known of the universe.

Like a wayfarer who, as he travels, sees things in the different quarters without any longing for them, the knowers of Brahman, even though their minds are amidst sensual enjoyments in the performance of actions, are never affected by them. Even thieves become their friends, since they derive Brahmic bliss from material enjoyments. The wise regard worldly enjoyments in the same light as a traveller who meets unconcernedly, on his way, a host of men bound on a marriage. Those who have mastered their minds look upon even a trace of desire in their hearts as a great evil, and therefore do not long after things. A king released from prison after great difficulties values greatly his kingdom; but an emperor who has won many laurels and wears the

great sword, cares not two straws for the earth over which he reigns. The conquerors of mind should previously have mastered it with their mind. There is no vessel to cross the ocean of rebirth other than the mastery of the mind. Those only will attain Mokṣa who have controlled the serpent, mind, full of the venom of its actions, which lives in the hole of the heart. Even pure and virtuous men, as also the famous and the intelligent would place on their head the lotus-like feet of those Great Ones who have their minds under control. Therefore, Oh Rāma, may you quell your tremendous foes, the organs, accoutred in this world of many cities with the weapon of excessive desire, and riding upon the elephant of sin generated through former enjoyments, and ever in rut with passion, anger and delusion. If you will destroy the Ahaṃkāra of the mind and conquer the foe-organs, then will the Vāsanā-s subside like a multitude of lotuses enveloped by snow. So long as one is not convinced, through the mastery of his mind, of the reality of the non-dual Principle, anguish of mind will not cease, just as the conception of ghosts is inseparable from intense gloom. The mind is sometimes stated to be a clever statesman, as it enables Jñānin-s to cognize their own Self through the discrimination of Tattva-s. It is also given the appellations of 'crafty general', or 'menial', by reason of the different functions it fulfils, of annihilating its enemy-organs, or of performing actions approved by superiors. In the case of true Jñānin-s, their pure mind, for which

there is no choice (between the two paths of virtue and vice), constitutes their better half, as it enables them to enjoy unalloyed bliss. It can, at the same time, be stated to be their father or true friend—father on account of its protecting nature; a friend because of the true counsels it imparts for obtaining the higher goal.

The mind of the wise treads the virtuous paths through the study of the beneficent Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s, contemplates Ātman and, having attained true cognition, will destroy its own form. Like a true father, such a mind confers Jñāna-siddhi upon one. If one saw unimpeded within himself, with true illumination, stability and purity, and were also initiated into the all-full Jñāna, then his mind will shine without blemish with the lustre of a gem, he having seen the nature of his own self in the Ākāśa of the heart. This pure jewel which is the mind gets stuck in the mire of the weak Vāsanā-s and hence is invisible to all. But if it be washed in the waters of Jñāna and cleansed of all its impurities, then the shining Mokṣa will disclose itself. Oh Rāma, you should, through constant discrimination, understand the true Jñāna and master the organs along with Ahaṁkāra and thus liberate yourself from the trammels of rebirth. Then all the ideas of differentiation existing in man such as 'he', 'I', etc. will cease to be. Having given up these differentiations of thought, may you find refuge in the one Reality which is other than these things and resting in your Ātman,

the seat of 'That', perform actions as you wish. Then the objects enjoyed by you with a false¹ mind will no longer be a bondage.

Now, Rāma, do not follow the path trodden by the three Asura-s—Dāma, Vyāla and Kaṭa— but follow the footsteps of the other three Asura-s— Bhīma, Bhāsa and Dr̥ḍha.

Here Rāma of great Jñāna interrupted the Ṛṣi with a question as to who these three Asura-s were. To which the great Ṛṣi replied, blessing Rāma with attainment of Nirvāṇa, into the secrets of which the Ṛṣi wished to initiate him: An Asura by the name of Śambara roamed through the regions of Pātāla, where he lived. He was an adept in the manifold, wily arts of Māyā. Once, this Asura subjected Devendra to ignominy, by means of his powerful, ocean-like army. Consequently, the Deva-s became infuriated and began to harass and destroy in all manner of ways the Asura-s, even when asleep or travelling in different directions. Observing this dastardly attack of the Deva-s, the chief of the Asura-s despatched against them a large army headed by Muṇḍika, Aṅka, Druma and others. The Deva-s availed themselves of an opportune occasion to foil their enemies and so destroyed all of them. Hearing of this, the irate Śambara marched to Deva-loka. On hearing him approach, who was well skilled in Māyā-vidyā (the science of illusion), the Deva-s were struck with terror and hid themselves in the

¹ False from the higher sense.

caves of the great Meru mountain. Thereupon, Śambara shed flames everywhere in Devaloka, like the Tripura-s (three cities) set on flames by Parameśvara, and returned to his own place, rendering void the heavenly world and leaving the Deva ladies wailing on the streets. Finding the field clear, the Deva-s returned in numbers to their place. Hearing this, the Asura despatched through Māyā-vidyā army after army without intermission. But they were repulsed and destroyed completely by the Deva-s. Śambara became infuriated at these disastrous results and created, through his Māyāvic power, Dāma, Vyāla and Kaṭa, who had Atlantean shoulders fit to bear the weight of Mahāmeru on them. They were not subject to the bond of Vāsanā-s and were devoid of desires or egoism. They knew neither death nor life, neither pleasure nor pain, neither victory nor defeat, neither advancement nor retreat. They were therefore incapable of defeat and were able to put an end to their antagonists by the discharge of their arrows. Fully convinced of their invulnerability, Śambara living in Pātāla, gathered together all his hosts living on hills, ocean and earth and sent them to reinforce these three Māyāvic personages. The countless hosts sent by Śambara sallied forth like many hills walking on legs, or like the ocean full of fishes overflowing the land, or the Kalpa come to an end. Similarly did the Deva-s march out in great numbers. The armies came into direct encounter like wind facing fire. Thus it seemed as though the next Kalpa had already come.

Weapons breathing flames came into contact with bodies which at once dropped down dead and began to accumulate into a mountain. Even mountains began to be tossed to and fro in the scarlet ocean of blood oozing out of the lifeless bodies. The angry and deceptive Asura-s approached close to their enemy and drove them away. The Deva-s fled from the field with despondent hearts. But the three Māyāvic personages mentioned above went in quest of them in all quarters. Not being able to trace them in their places of concealment, the victorious three returned from Devaloka to where their leader was.

Meanwhile the Deva hosts, ignorant of what to do, resorted to Brahmā, seated on his lotus seat, for aid. Having, with true love, paid homage to him, they related the atrocities committed by Śambara, flaming like fire, and their utter rout at the hands of the three persons created by the Asura. Thereupon Brahmā meditated and, pacifying them, spoke the following words: 'After the lapse of a thousand years, Devendra will kill the Asura-s in a war between himself and Śambara who is now overpowering his enemies. Till then, we advise you as follows. From today, go to Dāma and the others and apprise them of your intention to war with them. Having made a pretence of fighting, withdraw when they make onslaughts on you. If you conduct yourselves thus, repeating it over and over for 1,000 years, then the Vāsana of Ahaṁkāra will begin to reflect itself in the minds of the three Asura-s like a shadow on a glass.

Then if this idea of "I" gets firmly rooted in their minds, they will be in bondage, like birds caught in a trap, and can be easily disposed of. Desires, like Yama (death), bring manifold pain to persons in this world; devoid of them, there is bliss unalloyed by pain. All creatures in this world, being bound by the cord of pain, are greatly afflicted. It is only through desire that persons, whether blameless or omniscient or all-powerful, get entrammelled in this world. Even persons who are in a high state fall low through their desires, like a lion in a cage. Therefore do not be disheartened.' With these words, Brahmā instantaneously disappeared from the spot where he was.

The Deva-s, having heard these words of Brahmā, departed for Devaloka and there caused large kettle-drums to be sounded for war, so as to reverberate through earth and the rest of the universe. Having heard these sounds, the Asura-s rushed, full of ire, from Pātāla to Devaloka and hurled all kinds of destructive weapons at their enemies. The latter, who were bent upon biding their time according to Brahmā's injunctions, made pretence of fighting and retreated again and again. Thus a long period of time elapsed, the war being waged in diverse ways, when the insidious desire of 'I' stole into the hearts of the three Asura-s through such a process, and their minds got entrammelled. Then fear was generated in their hearts and all kinds of delusions took firm hold of them. Being drowned in Māyā and emaciated through pain, they were at a loss what to do. Then, in

order to preserve their bodies from deterioration, they began to deliberate upon the many means of enjoying happiness through illusory, worldly things. Being ever engaged in this thought, their minds became enthralled and unsteady. On the battlefield, consternation and depression of mind arose in them and they were appalled at the idea of death. They were agitated and looked about for a safe asylum. Being completely denuded of power, they were not able to face even one antagonist, when confronted. Were there no fuel, would Agni (fire) be able to consume anything and offer oblations to the Deva-s? To cut the story short, the three Asura-s fled away, panic-struck, and died.

Now Rāma, we have related the story of the Asura-s, Dāma and others, in order that you may attain Jñāna thereby (through not taking to the wrong path). Ignorant persons sportively associate themselves with Ajñāna (or worldly things), and as a result suffer the pain of existence arising through such Ajñāna. Therefore you should not follow the path pursued by the above three Asura-s.

Here Rāma questioned Vasiṣṭha: 'How did the three Asura-s arise from Parabrahman?'

To which Vasiṣṭha replied: The fearful Dāma and others regarded their bodies as the manifestations of the Supreme. Similarly, we who are here are not other than Cidākāśa. Therefore, thou redoubtable warrior, the conception of 'I' or 'thou' or Dāma, etc. are quite untrue. The Brahmic light, manifesting itself visibly

as the all-pervading Ātmic potency (Śakti) became agitated by the potent thought of the Asura Śambara. It then assumed the three forms of Dāma and the others and began its sportive pilgrimage in such forms. Therefore neither these persons with the above attributes nor we are really existent anywhere. That which really is, is Parabrahman, which is the knower of all as the witness, the knowledge itself, the immaculate, the all and the quiescent, without heterogeneity or dawning or setting. The Cit (Śakti) potency of that all-full Principle is this universe. All the heterogeneous, visible things, perceived through the organs of sense, are unreal; but that which is real is the one Brahmic Principle. May you rest happy in it.

3. THE STORY OF BHĪMA, BHĀSA AND DRDHA

Summary—Having explained in the previous story that the three Asura-s were defeated through Ahaṃkāra, the author relates this story to show that success results from non-Ahaṃkāra.

Not even an iota of benefit will accrue to those who dote upon their sons, lands and other worldly possessions as their own. Pain does not in the least affect those men of large heart who regard as a mere paltry bauble the perishable objects of the world, like

a stag that does not care for precious objects but contents itself with mere grass.

Those who have cognized Brahman, full of all potencies, will be ever protected by the guardian angels of the eight quarters, just as the vast universes are. Those only can truly be styled 'men' who are possessed of true love, are bent upon ceaseless inquiry and are ever engaged in true efforts for the realization of 'That' which enables one to discern Truth. The rest of mankind are mere brutes.

Though sore pressed by dire afflictions, one should never perform actions which ought not to be done. In drinking even nectar through ways forbidden, Rāhu¹ had to suffer greatly. But in the case of the wise who have reached a high state through their good qualities, all those things previously impossible of subjugation are now mastered; all dangers flee before them and they are in possession of incomparable acquisitions. What is there that cannot be accomplished easily by those stainless men, through their ceaseless efforts, their intelligence and a study of the supreme, spiritual books? If only the readers of Ātma-jñāna works who take delight in them would cease to long for the fruits but will meditate regularly and gradually upon them, then the mind will by degrees be ripened and at the end the endless Ātman will be reached.

¹ Rāhu, the serpent, one of the two nodes, had to suffer by having his head cut off.

May you, without pain or fear or sloth or egoism, walk on the path laid out by Ātma-jñāna books, without heeding the illusory voice of anyone. Do not court destruction by treading the wrong path. All our properties are futile. Wealth lands us in dangers. But desirelessness takes us to Bliss. Fame, longevity and acquisitions, as well as the Brahmic state, are involuntarily attained by those wise men who, walking on the right path, do not long after material pleasures, productive of the pains of Saṃsāra. Having prostrated at the beautiful feet of those great persons, one should free oneself with their aid from the trammels of rebirth which cannot be avoided through mere Tapas or pilgrimage or study of spiritual books. Great persons are those who are the least subject to the delusion of 'I' and anger and, treading the virtuous path, live their lives according to Ātma-jñāna books. Those who have not cognized Brahman, the true significance of 'I', cannot be said to have seen Cidākāśa; but those who have cognized Brahman can be said to be Cidākāśa itself. If the cloud of Ahaṃkāra called 'I' screens the sun of Jñānākāśa, then the lily of Brahman which is 'non-I' will never bloom. The original sprout of painful Ahaṃkāra with its tender stem of rebirths ramifies itself at length everywhere with long branches of 'mine' and 'thine' and yields its unripe fruits of Naraka (hell). This tree can be destroyed by its root only by the Jñāna fire.

Here Rāma queried the Ṛṣi thus: 'What is the nature of this Ahaṃkāra? How can we master it?

What are the results of such a mastery, whether a person is associated with the Vāsanā-s of the body or not?’

To which, Muni Vasīṣṭha replied: In the three worlds, there are three kinds¹ of Ahaṃkāra. Of these, two kinds of Ahaṃkāra are always beneficial, and one always to be condemned. That Jñāna which, after discrimination, enables us to know that all the worlds and Paramātmā are ourselves, that the self (or I) is eternal and that there is no other to be meditated upon than our self is the supreme Ahaṃkāra. That Jñāna which makes us perceive our own self to be more subtle than the tail end of paddy and to be ever existent, exterior to or transcending the universe, is the second kind of Ahaṃkāra. These two kinds of Ahaṃkāra will be found in Jīvan-mukta-s and will enable them to attain Mokṣa after crossing Saṃsāra, but will never subject them to bondage. That knowledge which identifies the ‘I’ with the body composed of the hands, feet, etc. is the third kind of Ahaṃkāra. This is common to all persons of the world and fearful in its results. It is the cause of the growth of the poisonous tree of rebirth. It should be destroyed at all cost. Dire, very dire, are its effects. Through this Ahaṃkāra, myriads of souls have been deluded and bereft of all intelligence. The sooner you annihilate

¹ The three Ahaṃkāra-s rise in reference to the three bodies of man. In the second kind of Ahaṃkāra, their direct experience is that they are like the tail end of paddy or the thumb, and not this body. .

Ahaṃkāra by the above-mentioned two kinds of Ahaṃkāra, the more will the Brahmic Principle dawn in you. Endeavour, through the two higher kinds of Ahaṃkāra, to attain Brahman: then if you are firmly established in that state where even these two kinds of Ahaṃkāra are given up, one by one, then that is the ripe Brahmic state. The non-identification of 'I' with the visible body (or visible things) is the Nirvāṇa proclaimed by the Veda-s.

Now hearken to the characteristics of these Ahaṃkāra-s. After the utter annihilation of the above-mentioned Asura-s, Dāma and others, Śambarāsura, who was well versed in Māyā-vidyā, became greatly incensed against the haughty Deva-s and, having reflected in diverse ways upon devising means for their destruction, thought: 'The three Asura-s, Dāma and others, whom I created before were devoid of Ātma-jñāna; and hence, seized with the unreal conception of "I" and "mine", succumbed to the Deva-s in fight. Therefore I will again create, through my Māyāvic power, Asura-s of Jñāna, well read in Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s. Possessed of the true Jñāna, they will not be destroyed by the illusory Ahaṃkāra.'

With this determination to overpower the Deva-s, Śambara willed into existence, with his stainless mind, three Asura-s who arose through Māyā like bubbles on the surface of the ocean encircling the earth. They were omniscient and, by their own wisdom, knew themselves to be of the nature of Jñāna. They had not the taint of Saṃcita Karman-s or attachment or

hatred. They were able to be firmly established in whatever state they wished to be. They were so illumined as not to have any doubts. These pure personages cared not a straw for the universe. Their names were Bhīma, Bhāsa and Dṛḍha. Being asked by their maker to wage war with the Deva-s, they marched straight against them and fought relentlessly for countless years: whenever the idea of 'I' and 'mine' flitted across the minds of these Asura-s, they probed into their hearts for the origin of 'I' through their subtle Jñāna inquiry. And then this manifestation of 'I' and 'mine' vanished at once like the wealth of non-charitably disposed persons. Those who have freed themselves of this ever-waxing Ahaṃkāra through Ātmic inquiry are never touched by the fear of birth and death, and are content with whatever objects they can easily have. They look equally upon all through their present Jñāna-vision existing from a remote period.

Therefore, in the war with Bhīma and the others, the whole host of Deva-s chose rather to fly away from the field, like wealth dissipated by a rake in a short time, and to hide themselves in different quarters. They then went to Viṣṇu for asylum and prostrated themselves before him who strode the earth with three strides.¹ Having assured them of his aid and told them not to be afraid, Viṣṇu marched to the battlefield in

¹ The three strides were taken in the Vāmana (Dwarf) Avatāra.

great anger and waged war by flinging at the three Asura-s his weapon, the discus. The three Asura-s were burnt by the flames issuing out of the weapon and were carried at once to the Loka called Vaikuṇṭha where Viṣṇu resides, wearing on his neck the Tulasi garland.

Thus, through Vāsanā-s, bondage is caused; with the disappearance of the former, the latter also vanishes. Therefore, Oh Rāma, you should know well all things through your discriminative Jñāna. Through such a knowledge of Tattva-s, there is the extinction of all the Vāsanā-s which form the medium of enjoyment. With the extinction of Vāsanā-s, the undaunted mind reaches quiescence like an oilless lamp.

4. THE STORY OF DĀŚŪRA

Summary—Having explained that the renunciation of Ahaṃkāra tends to the attainment of Ātman, the author again illustrated in this story the truth that Ātmic Saṃkalpa makes manifest this universe and constitutes it.

The best means of overcoming this great danger of Māyā, involving all in pain, is the destruction of the mind. Oh Rāma, may you not let slip from your memory the true significance of the perfect Tattva-jñāna. The longing for material enjoyments is itself

bondage; renunciation of the same is Mokṣa, which is of the nature of Brahman. Of what avail are other paths, such as the study of Śāstra-s, etc.? You should, without the least suffering, walk on this path of renunciation of desire. Oh Rāma, you should consider as fire or poison all objects which are said to be pleasant or painful. Repeatedly you should inquire into the nature of worldly enjoyments, differing only in degree; without letting your mind crave for them, if you enjoy them lightly, you will never be affected by them and will find them pleasant. The fixation of the mind in objects is the destruction of Ātman; but with the destruction of the mind, Ātman begins to dawn. In the case of Brahma-jñānin-s, their minds are extinct; the soiled mind of Ajñānin-s proves to be their fetter. The higher minds of Jñānin-s have neither bliss nor non-bliss, motion or non-motion, Sat or Asat; nor are they in states intermediate between these pairs.

Here Rāma asked Vasīṣṭha for enlightenment as to how this universe is in the one Tattva and the eternal Ātma-jñāna which is above all the universes. To which Vasīṣṭha replied: Like the one Ākāśa which, though permeating all objects, being inseparable from them, is yet through its subtle nature distinct from them, so the homogeneous one Jñāna Reality, though fully in all objects, is yet distinct from them and unaffected by the changes which such objects undergo. Ātma-jñāna, which is without the vain Saṃkalpa-s, name, destruction or heterogeneity is (to give a rough

description of it) as subtle as the one-hundredth part of the all-pervading Ākāśa. It is this which is called by different beneficent appellations such as Ātman, and which is the Jñāna in Jñānin-s. It is this which, though manifesting itself as Ajñāna, producing Saṃsāra, is yet non-dual in its nature and is the Jñāna which makes one know his own Self. It is this which, though it is the one Jñāna having none else to compare with it, yet manifests itself as identical with this universe of the nature of Sattā (Be-ness), with the ocean of waves encircling it. In the case of the ignorant who have not known their Ātman, the ceaseless cycles of pain-producing rebirths reduce them to abject slavery and suffering; but in those who have known their true Self, the Jñāna light dawns and all objects are known as one. And through the enjoyment of their own Self, the three, namely actor, action and instrument, will shine as one in their Self. All that they contemplate will be of that (Jñāna) essence alone. Those who are in enjoyment of this immemorial wealth will ever be so.

Jñāna is that in which are not found such things as dawning or setting, rising or standing, or going to a seat or returning from it, and which may be said both to exist and not to exist here at the same time. It is in this that the flawless, immaculate Ātman is. It is this Jñāna which, through its inherent, all-pervading potency, shines as the heterogeneous universe in the above-mentioned manner. It is this Jñāna which, through its power of becoming light and

darkness, and one and many, abandons its real all-full state and gradually becomes of the nature of Jīva through the heterogeneous conceptions of 'I', 'he', 'thou', etc. Then through the illusion of being caught in the meshes of Saṃsāra, it is subject to the dualities of Saṃkalpa-s and Vikalpa-s, existence and non-existence, attraction and repulsion, etc. Being thus in a differentiated state, though creating this body composed of eight principles through its manifold Saṃkalpa-s, it is yet not its master. The very fluctuation (or motion) in this state produces the septenary, graduated states of existence, locomotive and fixed. Through its incomparable Brahmic potency, it generates all and destroys them again. Therefore this universe appears to be everywhere through the Saṃkalpa of the mind, like the mirage manifesting itself in the unreal Bhūtākāśa (or elemental Ākāśa).

Just as a person, through excessive delusion, thinks himself to be another, the one impartite Jñāna appears to be unreal. Know that, Oh Rāma, to be above Jñāna which enables one to perceive sound and other objects. Know also that this Jñāna is nothing but the all-pervading Parabrahman which has manifested itself as this universe. The name, Brahman,¹ expresses very aptly this idea. Nought else is but this. Can the waves, etc. of an ocean be said to be other than water? Similarly, the incomparable Brahman

¹ Brahman from *brh* to expand.

alone truly exists; but not Ākāśa and other things which exist but in name. Like heat inseparable from fire and identical with it, so the universe which is of the nature of Brahman is identical with it.

This identity should be taught only to those who have developed the four means of salvation and have perfected themselves in Caryā (acts of service to the Lord), Kriyā (acts of worship towards Him) and Yoga. After the merits and deserts of the disciple have been gauged, he should be initiated into the mysteries of the identity of one's self with Brahman. But if this be imparted to those wallowing in desires, it will only fling them into the tortures of hell, never to return. It is only to illumined minds like yours, untinged with the desire for agitation-producing wealth, that this grand Truth will become self-evident. The disciple who, in order to free himself from existence, approaches, without the least doubt and with great self-sacrifice, a Guru of powerful knowledge should satisfy the above conditions. Just as in the presence of a lamp, sun or flower, light, day or odour respectively are produced, so in the presence of Cit, there arises this universe. Its mere appearance constitutes the form of the universe; but it really is not.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma remarked: 'The words of your holiness which are unfathomable because of their depth (of conception), and like the milky ocean, cool and immaculate, have brought surprise to my heart. Through them, my mind has sometimes been cleared of, and sometimes enveloped by, doubts,

like the autumnal clouds which produce alternately heat and cold. Oh Muni of great truth, how did these actions arise in Ātma-jñāna which is endless, one and manifold, of undying power, immeasurable and of noble characteristics?’

To which Vasiṣṭha replied: Know that I can prove experimentally and without the least contradiction the esoteric truths of the holy sentences in the Veda-s. I have to affirm that all I have said is truth. If the true Jñāna-vision is developed by you and your higher intelligence expands, then you will be able to judge for yourself as on the palm of the hand, whether it is easy or difficult to realize the truths of my statements.

The stainless Jñāna can be attained through the supreme Avidyā only after expelling its darkness which annihilates one’s own self (of Reality). You should destroy Ajñāna by Ajñāna itself, as like is destroyed by like, such as arrows by arrows, poison by poison, enemy by enemy, or dirt in water by the dust of *kataka* seeds. Through patient inquiry and reflection, you will find that it will fly away and with its disappearance, Brahmic bliss will be attained. If you have Jñāna and a cognition of its reality through the unification of Jīva and Īśvara, then you will be able to understand the true nature of Avidyā. Till the blissful Jñāna dawns in you, you should hold fast to the truth of my words that Māyā really is not. Those who have cognized directly for themselves that all are Brahman can be said to have attained Mokṣa.

The knowledge of diversity constitutes Māyā, which at all costs should be overcome. The other bank of the river against which lash the waves of Māyā can never be perceived without gaining Ātma-jñāna. If that is clearly seen, then such a state is the imperishable Nirvāṇa. Do not rack your brain now as to the origin of Māyā; but inquire into the means of its destruction. If it is destroyed, then you will be able to know how it arose, whence it arose, what its nature is and how it perishes. Therefore, Oh Rāma, should the medicine called Jñāna be administered to you, suffering from the malady of Ajñāna, the cause of all pain, then you will not be submerged in the ocean of rebirths. Like Vāyu which having its source in Ākāśa yet pervades it, the Cit-śakti arising out of Brahman, the Ātmic Be-ness, manifests as this universe. Through a slight motion in the immaculate Jñāna-ocean, all the hosts of Jīva-s and Īśvara manifest. Having cognized without doubt through your divine vision that the one Brahman alone is partless, may you immerse yourself in the Jñāna-ocean.

Through a slight motion in the one Jñāna, the Jñāna-śakti in it becomes transformed in a moment into various Śakti-s of many powers, when they are associated with the three potencies (Śakti-s) of Space, Time and Karman-s. Though resting in its eternal state of Brahmic Reality, this Jñāna-śakti looks upon itself as conditioned. While contemplating itself thus, there comes upon it, in its train of ideas, the conception of the limitation of names and forms. Associated as it

then is with innumerable Vikalpa-s, it is bound by the conceptions of space, time and actions. It is at this stage that the Jñāna Reality passes under the appellation of Jīva. This Jīva generating manifold pain becomes tinged with Ahaṃkāra. This Ahaṃkāra manifests itself as the clouded Buddhi leading to definite knowledge. Then this Buddhi suffused with illusions becomes the Manas of thought. This Manas, full of fancies, becomes gradually the Indriya-s (organs). These ten Indriyas, hand, etc. are termed the body of flesh. Thus it is that the Jīva, through its association (with the universe), gradually debases itself, being bound by the cord of Saṃkalpa-s and enmeshed in the snare of pain. Thus, the mind, which was originally the one reality itself, is bound by desires, through its Ahaṃkāra, like worms caught in their own chrysalises. Through the Tanmātra-s (rudimentary properties) produced by itself, it is bound in the snare of its own internal (mental) actions and is afflicted like an undaunted male lion in a forest, bound by fetters. Thus has the one principle been named by the great ones with the different appellations of Manas, Buddhi, Jñāna, Kriyā, Ahaṃkāra, Yātanā (suffering) bodies, Prakṛti, Māyā, the base Mala (impurity), Karman, bondage, Citta, Avidyā, desires, etc.

Hence these diverse things of the world, which have appeared as many in different places through the bondage of our desires, do not confer the least benefit to the (real) mind. These things are like a huge banyan tree with its long branches, etc. latent

in a banyan seed. The mind is ever tossed in the ocean of desires, scorched by the fire of pain and devoured by the boa-constrictor of anger. Totally losing equilibrium through its intense suffering, it becomes oblivious of its own reality. It is this mind that you should try to lift out of Māyā, like an elephant sunk in mire. Oh Rāma, the very incarnation of grace, those are Rākṣasa-s in the guise of men who do not liberate their minds reeling under the fiery poison of births and deaths, in the presence of their two enemies, good and evil.

Thus have the Jīva-s, which are but a sport of Cit, arisen through Bhāvanā-s (thoughts), as separate entities out of the one Brahman, countless as drops of water trickling down from the Meru heights. Some of them have subjected themselves to one, two or three births. Some of them have undergone more than a hundred births. Some have attained births beyond number as Kimpnara-s,¹ Gandharva-s, Vidyādhara-s or the hosts of Uraga-s. Some are born as the sun or the moon or Varuṇa; some as Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Śiva; some as Brahmins or kings or Vaiśya-s or the serviceable Śūdra-s; some as beasts, birds or reptiles; some as tendrils, unripe fruits, fruits, roots or straw. Some monads are born as the mountains,

¹ Kimpnara-s are elementals of Bhuvārloka or intermediate space, with the body of a human being and the head of a horse. Gandharva-s are elementals of the same regions who are musicians, and hence preside over sounds. Uraga-s are serpent elementals. Vidyādhara-s are elementals of another order.

Mahendra, Sahya, Meru or Mandara; some as trees, Kadamba, lime, palmyra, etc.; some as the grand septenary seas of salt, curd, ghee, milk, sugar-cane juice, honey or pure water;¹ some as the different quarters or rivers, and other objects, high or low. Like a ball thrown to and fro by the hand, these monads are tossed about by Time, enter various bodies and attain discrimination through repeated changes; the ignorant subject themselves to the ever-recurrent cycle of rebirths. It is only through the illusory Māyā which is in the one Reality of Brahman, like the waves of an ocean, that the whole universe expands itself, being created and preserved through this Ajñāna.

After Vasiṣṭha had concluded, Śrī Rāma questioned him as to how this Jīva, though associated with Manas, can be identified with Brahman. To which Vasiṣṭha replied: Having heard my reply to this question, you will also be able to know the means by which the worlds came into existence. May you be blessed with discrimination on hearing from me about these. The imperishable Ātman through the force of space, time, etc. assumes bodies made up of the four quarters, etc. through its Cit-śakti in order to disport itself therein. Then through force of the Vāsanā-s synonymous with this Jīvātman, the stainful, restless mind is generated. This potency of mind, which was in a neutral state

¹ This refers to the seven seas by which the seven Dvīpa-s are surrounded. .

with Karman-s and non-Karman-s balanced, now becomes active; and the moment it becomes imbued with the Bhāvanā of the Tanmātra of Ākāśa, that is the subtle sound, through such fluctuating power it becomes dull by the nature of Ākāśa. Then, imbued with the Bhāvanā of the Tanmātra of Vāyu, namely the subtle touch, through the fluctuating power of Vāyu, etc. it becomes of the nature of Vāyu. Though mingled with Ākāśa and Vāyu, it further pursues the same process, and imbued with the Bhāvanā-s of the Tanmātra-s, form, taste and smell, it becomes of the nature of Agni (fire), Ap (water) and Pṛthivī (earth), respectively. Thus this Ātman appears as of the nature of the all-pervading universe, enveloped by the ideations of the five elements of the five Tanmātra-s. It alone manifests this body of ours in the Ākāśa, like a transient fire-spark. It shines in the heart-lotus of all, manifesting itself as the eightfold body composed of the five Tanmātra-s, with Ahaṁkāra and Buddhi and Manas, making it eight. Through excessive Vāsanā-s, this body is generated through thought. Citta having become concrete, it engenders the gross body like a Bilva fruit. Then with the radiance of a sperm darting into a womb, it shines with a form by its own power, with a head above, feet below, hands at its sides and a belly in the middle.

Through the potency of primeval time, an externally visible form arises, gifted with intelligence, cleverness, power, nobleness, true Jñāna and wealth.

Such a form is the illumined Brahmā called Viśva. This Brahmā first beheld his own person which was lovely and transcendent. Endowed, as he was, with imperishable good Guṇa-s, and able to plumb into the three periods of time, he looked into the Param-ākāśa which is non-dual, illimitable and of the nature of Jñāna to see what existed before. Then, with perfect Jñāna-vision, he saw the rise and fall of myriads of previous evolutions of which he himself was the author. Therefore knowing all (the previous) Varṇa-s (castes), races, Dharma-s, etc. he created them anew as if in sport. In the same manner, did he also bring into existence innumerable Vedaśāstra-s to enable the Jīva-s to attain liberation—Jīva-s who arose through Saṃkalpa like an ephemeral Gandharva city. Through this Brahmic mind, all the creations of the five subtle elements blossomed physically, like buds blooming in spring. Deva-s and men fell into cycles of birth through their own Saṃkalpa-s. If people in this world knew thus their origin and then annihilated their Saṃkalpa, they would not be subject to the trammels of birth, like a lamp without ghee (or oil). Ākāśa and other elements arise in vain through Saṃkalpa. Therefore, Oh Rāma, you should, in your waking state, observe this world as in a dream. This world cannot be said to arise or perish at any time or place. From the standpoint of the one real Jñāna, all else is illusory.

Being firmly convinced that the load of Saṃsāra, which is a hole into which the great serpents of desire

crawl, is wholly unreal, may you, Oh Rāma, sever the bonds of Saṃsāra and live immutably in the immeasurable state of Brahman. What matters it to you whether the Gandharva city (of this world) which seems beautiful to behold, exists or is destroyed? Will it be for your good or evil? Of what import is it to you, whether your wife, children, etc., who forge the bonds of Māyā, prosper or not in this world? The longing for wife and wealth enchains you; but the very enjoyments which are the means of fanning desires in an Ajñānin thereby causing untold pain, serve a powerful Jñānin in making his mind desireless and unobscured, as he contemplates the suffering. Through this beneficial course, when you are amidst the Karman-s of Saṃsāric life, you should perform them, enjoying things that you come by and not pining for things that do not fall to your lot. Not having an object at present, the Mukta-s never think of enjoying it in the future; nor do they disregard as vile, an object at present obtained. Oh lotus-eyed one, this is the true nature of Jñānin-s.

The bond of Māyā never affects those omniscient adepts who have erased from their minds all Vāsanā-s, being convinced that visible things are illusory. Having established your intelligence in the immaculate state of Brahman do not let it, Oh Rāma, be attracted or repelled by the universes, both external and internal to the body. Being without attachment or hatred in all actions, Ātma-jñānin-s never let their minds be affected by such actions, like a lotus leaf on

which water falls. If your mind, Oh Rāma, abandons the so-called pleasures arising from sensual objects, you will have Ātma-jñāna, cross the Saṃsāric ocean and liberate yourself from rebirth.

If you long for the supreme Brahmic state, you should destroy the mind of Vāsanā-s, like a flower losing its Vāsanā-s (or odour). The enjoyment, without fear, of (Brahmic) bliss constitutes the vessel which enables safe landing to those who are drowned in the Saṃsāric ocean, full of waters agitated by the base Vāsanā-s. Those in whom Ātma-jñāna has dawned follow the worldly avocations and yet are not tainted by them. They do not refrain from worldly actions, nor long even for the flower garden in Svarga. They do not feel distress even in deserted or desolate places. Like the sun, they tirelessly perform their appointed duties and never deviate from the ordained Law. Thus said Muni Vasiṣṭha.

Vālmiki said: Hear me attentively, Oh Bharadvāja. At this description of the Brahmic state by Muni Vasiṣṭha, Śrī Rāma became pure, his mind being annihilated; his heart was rendered calm with the ambrosia of the incomparable Tattva-jñāna and became the Plenum itself. Then Vasiṣṭha again continued: At one period, Śiva creates all the universes; at another period, Brahmā; at another period, Viṣṇu; then Muni-s, and so on. Sometimes Brahmā is born in a lotus; sometimes in water; sometimes in the mundane egg; sometimes in Ākāśa. In one creation, the mighty trees alone will exist in this universe; in another, man

alone; in another, the several mountains; in another, the earth alone; in another, stones alone; and in another, flesh alone; and in another creation, gold alone. Thus will creation exist in diverse ways. During the several creations, the foremost is sometimes Ākāśa, sometimes Vāyu, sometimes Agni, sometimes Ap and sometimes Pṛthivī. Here I have but briefly described to you the creation of one Brahmā. The order of evolution will not be the same in all Yuga-s but will vary with different Yuga-s. Kṛta¹ and other Yuga-s will again and again recur. There is no object in this world which does not circle round many times. Therefore, in order to understand truly the great Māyā, in its glowing colours, you will have to hear, Oh Rāma, the story of Dāśūra, well versed in the Veda-s.

In the country of Magadha, where the gentle zephyrs breathed cool fragrance in the flower gardens, the loveliest of all spots on earth, there lived a noble Muni by the name of Dāśūra on a pleasant mountain abounding with plantain trees and emitting the odour of camphor, Kadamba and areca. This Muni was the son of Śaraloma who was like the son of Brahmā, being in the possession of Tapas fitting one for Mokṣa. He was like Kaca, the son of Lord Bṛhaspati (Jupiter) in Devaloka; among mortals, he was the supreme of men; in Tapas, he was unrivalled. After Śaraloma had passed many Yuga-s in the forest on these mountains,

¹ One of the four Yuga-s.

along with his son, he liberated himself from his body, like a bird out of its cage, and assumed Deva (celestial) form. Being left alone in the forest, Dāśūra, the son, wept bitterly over his dear father's death like a nightingale parted from its mate, and forgot to perform, with purificatory water, the obsequies that are ordained in the case of pure Brahmins.

While he was thus dejected on account of separation from his parent, the sylvan Devatā (goddess), commiserating greatly his pitiable condition, without making herself visible to him, addressed him (as an invisible voice) thus: 'Oh thou son of a great Muni, being thyself a Muni of illumined mind, do not despond because of thy pain, like the ignorant. How is it thou hast not, ere now, been impressed with the unreality of this ephemeral Saṃsāra? With birth, death is inevitable. Are there persons in this world who are so insane as to maintain that the sun which rises in the East does not set in the West? Do not afflict thyself with grief.'

Having heard these words, the Muni shook off his sorrow and performed ceremonies according to Vedic injunctions and then longed for the Tapas leading to Mokṣa. Therefore, he began to perform religious ceremonies according to the mandates of the Veda which he followed. Being without full Jñāna, he was not satisfied with the purity of the many spots on the earth which he came across, but pondered in his mind upon performing Tapas upon the top of a tree, as if such Tapas alone would conduce to real

purity. For this purpose, he reared a great fire, invoked the Deva hosts, and performed a Yajña by cutting into parts his body and offering them to the fire. Then the resplendent God Agni, finding that the flesh of the learned Brahmin, such as the throat, shoulders, etc. was being offered through itself to the Deva-s, and wishing to know the reason, appeared before the Brahmin and questioned him: 'What is thy intention?'

The Muni with folded hands eulogized him and said: 'As I am not able to find any pure place on this earth, please favour me with a seat on a tendril on the top of a tree.' The God Agni granted the boon and disappeared like a wave of the ocean.

There was a Kadamba tree in the forest which reared its head aloft in the Ākāśa, outstripping the sphere of even clouds. Muni Dāśūra seated himself on a tendril on the top of this tree and performed Tapas, without the least doubt of mind. Surveying first all the quarters in an instant, after seating himself in the Padma posture, he controlled his mind. Not being able to attain Brahma-jñāna directly, he performed (religious) Karman-s alone; then with a mind that did not long for the fruit of actions, he performed Yajña for twelve years and offered oblation to the Deva-s (celestials). As all the Yajña-s were performed without any obstacles, strictly according to Vedic injunctions, such as Gomedha,¹ Aśvamedha and

¹ Gomedha—the sacrifice of cows; Aśvamedha—that of horses; Naramedha—that of men.

Narmedha, his mind became steady, clear and full and at once the priceless Jñāna took possession of it and pervaded it.

This great personage, becoming free from the necessity of rebirth, and having eradicated fully all Vāsanā-s, thus spent his days on the tendrils of a branch, teeming with beehives, when one day before his pure eyes the sylvan goddess appeared visibly, clad in full-blown flowers. He questioned her as to who she was.

The Goddess replied: 'I have known that persons who are devoted to the wise can without doubt accomplish easily what is otherwise difficult of achievement. Oh Jñāna-conferring Muni, I have to inform you that I am the Goddess presiding over this forest. I love to reside in the exquisite arbours of plants full of blooming flowers. In the month of Caitra (April-May) when the moon shines with thirteen Kalā-s (on the thirteenth day), I was in the group of sylvan goddesses who had assembled together on the occasion of the grand festival of Kāma (the god of love). All my companions rejoiced in the possession of sons; being childless, my mind was troubled. While you, Lord, are here like a Kalpa tree yielding anything to those who long for it, why should I bewail the want of a child, as if I had no protector? Therefore, please bless me with a son: else will I enter the fire through the grief of childlessness.'

At which the Muni laughed and handing over to her a flower, said: 'Oh swan-like one, thou wilt in

the course of a month be able to have a son; but as thou implored for a son, vowing to enter the fire in case thy request were not granted, thy son will attain Jñāna, undergoing hard probation.'

The moon-like face of the Goddess began to shine, radiant with lustre, at the prospect of bearing a son, and she asked permission of the Muni to sit at his feet and abide by his orders. The Muni being unwilling to agree to her request, she returned to her abode and there gave birth to a son who shone with the splendour of the full moon. After the child had passed twelve years, the mother with her offspring went to the Muni and addressed him thus: 'Oh thou God, who, having perceived Truth, confers it upon all, this my son whom I begot through thy grace, became through my instructions well versed in all departments of knowledge; and yet he has not attained Ātma-jñāna. He is tossed about in this ocean of rebirth. Please therefore bestow upon him that Jñāna by which he may know his own Self.'

To which the Muni replied: 'Leaving thy son with me as my disciple, return home.'

Accordingly, the Goddess returned home, leaving her son. The loving disciple prostrated before the feet of the Guru and remained there. Then the Muni initiated his disciple in the all-full Jñāna by recounting illuminating, spiritual stories, the several evidences, the rationale of the Purāṇa-s and the underlying meaning of the sacred sentences in Vedānta, as well as the many paths that lead to Jñāna.

While I was journeying in the Ākāśa *incognito* to bathe in the river Gaṅgā, one day I went from the region of the Sapta R̥ṣi-s¹ to the Kadamba tree where the Muni Dāśūra was initiating his disciple at night and heard the following from the Muni's mouth which I shall now communicate to you:

Hearken now to the present story in order that thou mayest understand the true nature of the Brahmic Reality. There was once a great and noble emperor named Svottha (or that which arises out of itself) who rejoiced in the possession of immense courage and fame. The many protectors of the universe bowed before his commands. This emperor was a lover of Truth and wrought many wonders. One may count the ocean waves rather than the myriads of actions which he performed productive of good or evil to persons (good or bad). Neither sharp instruments nor wind nor fire could affect him. How can the two hands of a person seize and affect the Ākāśa which is all-pervading! Not even the eternal Trimūr̥ti-s,² who are ceaselessly engaged in action as if in sport, could outstrip this emperor in his efforts.

There were, three persons who formed the bodies of this great personage, able to bear any burden. These persons, who transcended even the powerful universe, went by the names, Uttama (high), Madhyama

¹ The seven R̥ṣi-s corresponding to the constellation Ursa Major.

² The Hinḍu Trinity—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra.

(middle), and Adhama (low). The king abode in the Jñānākāśa out of which he arose triple-bodied. In this city of Jñānākāśa, there were fourteen long streets. There were also in that city heavenly pleasure gardens, groves, sporting resorts, gardens of creepers, seven tanks and two lights, which were both hot and cold. In all the three worlds of the city—Svarga, Madhyama and Pātāla—filled with all things and upheld by three massive pillars, the king created, with Māyā which never actually is, big apartments whose log framework was bones. Each apartment was covered with soft skin and hair and filled with blood. Each of them had nine windows through which the breezes played. Every one of them shone with the beautiful lights of the five Indriya-s (sense-organs). External to it, appeared two arms. The ghost of Ahaṃkāra, nervously resisting the possibility of Brahmic meditation, guarded and protected it. Having, like a bird pent up in a cage, amused himself with the ghost of Ahaṃkāra in a number of halls and sported gleefully in diverse ways, the king migrated from one hall to another created by him and there danced ghost-like everywhere as he passed along. The moment he thinks of quitting one for another, he does so; the instant he contemplates death, he puts an end to his existence. With his mind ever whirling, he subjects himself to the cycle of births and deaths. But the seat of all is Jñānākāśa alone. Though dead once, he will again exist like the waves of the ocean. This triple-bodied king lives pleasantly in his city, shining like a Gandharva city,

and being oppressed by ever-surging actions sometimes droops, sometimes rejoices; he is sometimes carried away by the love of Self, sometimes reels giddily or is clear in mind; he sometimes exclaims, 'Oh, I am poor, I am low, I am high, I am base, I am noble' and so on. Oh, how can I describe the state of mind of that person who is tossed to and fro, like a light object in a stormy ocean?

At these words of the Muni, the son asked his father what the emperor mentioned in the above story is meant to symbolize. To which Dāśūra replied: 'Should you know truly the real nature of the king, then you will also know the unreality of birth and death. In the story related above, I emphasized the illusory character of birth and death in this mundane existence which has spread itself far and wide through Saṃkalpa. It is only Saṃkalpa that incarnated in the Paramākāśa in the form of King Svottha. Of itself it evolves and disappears at stated times. With the growth of Saṃkalpa, there arises the universe; with the extinction of the former, the latter also disappears. Even the primeval Trimūrti's and other gods are but the inseparable parts of the bodies of this Saṃkalpa. Saṃkalpa, which is the meditation of Brahman which arises in Ātman through the budding of intelligence in it, first creates in Jñānākāśa the town of three worlds; the fourteen streets in the town stand for the fourteen worlds; the pleasure gardens, groves, etc. symbolize the pure earth; the mountains of sport in that city stand for Mahāmeru, Mandara and

other mountains; the two lights that will never be quenched by the wind are the sun and the moon; the gardens of creepers stand for the many rivers full of water; the seven tanks in that city represent the seven oceans shaped into lotus-like forms through Vāḍava Agni. In such a great city which is the universe, the above-mentioned king of Saṃkalpa assumes different bodies through his Karman-s. And these bodies are symbolized in the story by the spacious halls. The bodies of Deva-s are located in the higher regions; those of Nāga-s in the nether regions; those of men in the middle ones. Such bodies move about impelled by the powerful Prāṇa (life) currents. Migrating in the diverse halls or bodies, the king regards as true the unreal ghost of Ahaṃkāra which impedes his progress in Ātma-jñāna. When he flirts with them, they sometimes are and sometimes are not. The bodies composed of flesh, called here *grha-s* (houses), appear and disappear like the waves of the ocean. As Saṃkalpa-s arise, desired objects come to be perceived. The moment the Saṃkalpa ends they disappear. And so long as he is in the clutches of Saṃkalpa, he is greatly afflicted. Not enjoying the least happiness, he chafes greatly at his lot. With the contemplation of "I", the train of ideas, which are the universe, sets in; otherwise, the universe would vanish as instantaneously as darkness before the sun.

‘ This Saṃkalpa-puruṣa, who is sunk in the enjoyments, he contemplates, has three bodies, the high,

the low and the intermediate. The three Guṇa-s are his three bodies and form the substratum of the three worlds. Of these, Tāmasic Saṃkalpa breeds pain through the actions of Prakṛti (matter) and is base like Pātāla worms. The pure Sāttvic Saṃkalpa leads to good Dharma-s, Jñāna and liberation. The Rājasic Saṃkalpa leads persons naturally into the mundane existence. Having divested yourself of these three Saṃkalpa-s, you will reach the immaculate state very easily. Having freed yourself from all desire for visible objects before you, and having made your impure mind firm and steady through your pure mind, may you completely eradicate the Saṃkalpa arising both within your heart and without it. You may unflinchingly perform stainless Tapas for many myriads of years; you may be able to travel at once through the three worlds, Svarga, Pātāla and earth; but never will you be able to reach Mokṣa, except through the firm path of the annihilation of Saṃkalpa. Therefore endeavour, as far as possible, to destroy this Saṃkalpa and thereby attain Brahmīc bliss, devoid of pain and diversity. In the string of Saṃkalpa, all our countless thoughts are strung like many beads. If the string be severed in pieces, then you may infer, Oh son, what will become of the illusory thoughts which are strung on it.

‘I trust that you will perform such Karman-s only as present themselves before you, without the Saṃkalpa-s which make you choose between them. Should Saṃkalpa leave you, then your Jñāna will not pinion

itself to visible things. Having reached the non-dual Brahmic state, may you enjoy the supreme bliss, being free from the heterogeneities of the universe as well as misconceptions.'

At these words of Dāśūra, his disciple asked him: 'What is Saṃkalpa? How came it into existence? And how does it flourish or become extinguished, decreasing gradually?' To which the Muni replied: 'The mere manifestation of Ātma-jñāna, the supreme, the true and the universal as visible things, is Saṃkalpa. Rising from a small beginning, this Saṃkalpa is the primeval seed. Gradually increasing, it begins to obscure the one clear Paramātmā, like thick clouds, to generate firmly the conception of materiality. Oh my son, when the intelligence views the visible things outside, then it differentiates them from itself. Then Saṃkalpa reigns supreme. The seed of Jñāna sprouts as Saṃkalpa. This Saṃkalpa, having considered itself as different from others, multiplies itself and increases prodigiously. Such a development is evil only and is in no way beneficial. Therefore do not dream of walking on the path of Saṃkalpa. Do not for a moment contemplate the things of the universe. Through such a contemplation, there will ensue supreme unhappiness. You need not exert yourself much to rid yourself of Saṃkalpa. With the curbing of thoughts, one's mind will perish. To crumple a full-blown flower in one's hand taxes one but little, but even that little effort is not needed to do away with Saṃkalpa. Saṃkalpa is destroyed with the control of

thoughts. Having firmly annihilated the external Saṃkalpa through the internal one, and having destroyed the impure mind through the pure, may you rest firmly in your Ātma-jñāna. If this path is faithfully followed, the highest goal can be achieved through the extinction of Saṃkalpa in the short space of time required for a black gram to roll from the side of a pot. Take my word for it, that it will happen. As Saṃkalpa arose only through the misconception of Ajñāna and is not really existent, it resembles the universe and Ākāśa. Though the husk is natural to rice, and rust to iron, yet the former disappear through efforts made. Similarly Ajñāna which clings to Ātman can be made to disappear through Ātmic inquiry. Having cleared yourself of all doubts, you should endeavour to walk on the spiritual path with the aid of the spiritual illumination imparted by your Guru. All the visible things seen by us are valueless. The relationship of a Guru and his disciple alone should be honoured as the torch of light leading to Brahman.'

Having heard these words of Dāśūra Muni, I went to the Muni there; and having paid him due respects with a good heart, I passed the night with him on the tendril of the tree. As in the case of libertines, the whole night passed as if in a second, but in the recitation of many true stories. Then I took leave of Dāśūra and reached the banks of the Gaṅgā. This, my son, is the nature of this universe.

5. THE STORY OF KACA

Summary—Having shown in the previous story that it is Saṃkalpa which manifests itself as Jīva-s, Īśvara and the universe, the author shows in this story that they are not other than Cit.

In the long periods of eternity, a hundred years do not count for even a second, albeit we take them for a long period and afflict ourselves with never-ending desire. Endeavour not to make your mind settle on desire; do not allow it to roam at large upon the objects of sense. May you live in that state in which you originally were, whilst you were devoid of desire. Like beautiful gems which emit a dazzling radiance without any desire or volition on their part, the universe which is Sat shines in the one Brahman (and should not be longed after as different from it). In the non-dual Brahman, there are not the dual conceptions of the doer (of actions) and the non-doe. In the absence of desire, there is the uncreate idea of non-doe; but with desire the idea of doer arises. Besides these two, there arises no other conception in Ātman. Of these two,¹ whatever conception suits you best, in that shall you stay. Having vanquished this ever-growing mind of yours, may you rest firm in your own Self. Whether you meant to be a Kartr

¹ Here are described the two paths on one of which one identifies himself with the universe as the doer and on the other, one thinks he is not the doer. There is also the third path on which he is neither.

(doer) or not, this path of annihilation of the mind will be most beneficial to you and will never generate pain.

If you wish to be the Akarṭṛ (non-doer), then you should conduct yourself according to the ways of the world. There should not exist the idea of separateness in the heart. The moment the conception of 'mine', 'I', 'you', 'I did it', etc. arise in one, sorrow is engendered. Will persons be so foolish as to identify their self with the body? Such a conception is tantamount to (the raising up of) twenty-one hells. Even on the visitation of pain (in the body), do not confound the 'I' with the body. The wise would be as loath to identify their 'I' with the body as flesh-eaters are unwilling to taste dog's flesh. It is only because of the folly of the identification of 'I' with the body that true Jñāna-vision does not arise; but should it be dispelled, then the Jñāna light will shine unobscured, like moonlight in the absence of clouds. Through such vision, you will be able to land safely on the other, beautiful shore of the ocean of rebirth. Having contemplated the fact that you are not a Karṭṛ (or doer) of anything and that there are no such differences as 'I', 'thou' and 'others', may you be the Akarṭṛ with firm mind.

Then there is the other course. You may contemplate thus: 'I am the Karṭṛ of all. The countless hosts of objects are no other than myself.' With this contemplation you should rid your mind of fluctuation and make it steady. If these two methods do not commend themselves to you, then you should contemplate yourself as being neither of these two

and as being that which is beyond speech and mind. You should rest in your own Self which is the supremest state. The wise, who have cognized the non-dual, supreme state, abide in their own Self. All the enveloping Vāsanā-s tend towards bondage; but their extinction leads to Mokṣa. Having first destroyed the impure Vāsanā-s which cling to the mind, associating with sound and other objects of sense, you should eventually abandon even the pure Vāsanā-s which lead to Mokṣa. And then you should cease to perform even those actions which tend to produce the pure qualities of love, charity, contentment, amity with all and passionlessness. Having first cultivated the Vāsanā-s tending to the incomparable Cinmātra (the absolute consciousness) through the destruction of internal actions, having gradually destroyed even these Vāsanā-s along with the internal organs (lower mind), and having ceased to make the efforts required for accomplishing the above, if you are in a quiescent state, as free as Ākāśa, completely denuded of all Vāsanā-s, mind, action, Jñāna and Ajñāna and free from Cidābhāsa (distorted conception), the fluctuation of Prāṇa and their causes, then you will be truly that which you are in fact.

Those who are in that tranquil state in which there are no Vāsanā-s and attachment to the world are Jīvan-mukta-s. Such Jīvan-mukta-s will become the Supreme Īśa (Lord). It matters not whether they are engaged in Karman-s or Samādhi or not; they are yet Jīvan-mukta-s, having abandoned all Vāsanā-s. Inasmuch as there is no taint of desire in their mind,

no fruit of action is theirs through commission or omission. The Śāstric knowledge is not indispensable in the case of those whose minds have been emptied of all Vāsanā-s, having for long periods been concentrated. There is no more beneficial state than that Mauna (silent) state which is void of all Vāsanā-s.

Extremely meagre in number are they who, having known that which should be known, after setting their face against the worldly things in which they were caught, always worship that Reality which is the goal of this ancient universe; all others reel in the illusions of the world. Everyone in this world performs actions through the sight of the body and not of the Ātman. Search where we will, either in Deva-loka or Bhūloka or Pātāla, there exist five elements only and not six. Those who have reached that firm state in which they are able to free themselves from delusion are never attracted to anything. To the ignorant who have not the advantage of real experience, the cycle of rebirths is like the ocean at the time of dissolution; but to those who are not subject to delusion, rebirth is as harmless as the footprints of a cow. The sensual pleasures never affect wise ones. Of what avail to persons living in towns are the low females living in barren tracts and incapable of yielding pleasure? In the spacious and pure ocean of Brahman, mountains are like foam. Before the radiance of Brahman, the earth is a mirage. These knotty points were once propounded clearly by Kaca, the son obtained by Bṛhaspati through a boon.

and as being that which is beyond speech and mind. You should rest in your own Self which is the supremest state. The wise, who have cognized the non-dual, supreme state, abide in their own Self. All the enveloping Vāsanā-s tend towards bondage; but their extinction leads to Mokṣa. Having first destroyed the impure Vāsanā-s which cling to the mind, associating with sound and other objects of sense, you should eventually abandon even the pure Vāsanā-s which lead to Mokṣa. And then you should cease to perform even those actions which tend to produce the pure qualities of love, charity, contentment, amity with all and passionlessness. Having first cultivated the Vāsanā-s tending to the incomparable Cīnmātra (the absolute consciousness) through the destruction of internal actions, having gradually destroyed even these Vāsanā-s along with the internal organs (lower mind), and having ceased to make the efforts required for accomplishing the above, if you are in a quiescent state, as free as Ākāśa, completely denuded of all Vāsanā-s, mind, action, Jñāna and Ajñāna and free from Cidābhāsa (distorted conception), the fluctuation of Prāṇa and their causes, then you will be truly that which you are in fact.

Those who are in that tranquil state in which there are no Vāsanā-s and attachment to the world are Jīvan-mukta-s. Such Jīvan-mukta-s will become the Supreme Īśa (Lord). It matters not whether they are engaged in Karman-s or Samādhi or not; they are yet Jīvan-mukta-s, having abandoned all Vāsanā-s. Inasmuch as there is no taint of desire in their mind,

no fruit of action is theirs through commission or omission. The Śāstric knowledge is not indispensable in the case of those whose minds have been emptied of all Vāsanā-s, having for long periods been concentrated. There is no more beneficial state than that Mauna (silent) state which is void of all Vāsanā-s.

Extremely meagre in number are they who, having known that which should be known, after setting their face against the worldly things in which they were caught, always worship that Reality which is the goal of this ancient universe; all others reel in the illusions of the world. Everyone in this world performs actions through the sight of the body and not of the Ātman. Search where we will, either in Deva-loka or Bhūloka or Pātāla, there exist five elements only and not six. Those who have reached that firm state in which they are able to free themselves from delusion are never attracted to anything. To the ignorant who have not the advantage of real experience, the cycle of rebirths is like the ocean at the time of dissolution; but to those who are not subject to delusion, rebirth is as harmless as the footprints of a cow. The sensual pleasures never affect wise ones. Of what avail to persons living in towns are the low females living in barren tracts and incapable of yielding pleasure? In the spacious and pure ocean of Brahman, mountains are like foam. Before the radiance of Brahman, the earth is a mirage. These knotty points were once propounded clearly by Kaca, the son obtained by Br̥haspati through a boon.

Listen to that story: Once upon a time Kaca, after having returned from the supreme Samādhi he was in, exclaimed with an exhilarated heart and a voice that did not know how to find expression for its ecstatic joy: What is it that I have to do? To which abode shall I fly (there being none for me now)? What shall I cease to perform or abstain from? Like the flood of Pralaya, my Self alone pervades everywhere in this world. Whether in the body or out of it, in the quarters of Ākāśa or on the earth or any other place, my Self alone pervades. There is no object which is not found in my own Self. The Self-shining one is my own Self and this Saccidānanda alone shines (or is).

6. THE CONCLUSION OF STHITI PRAKARAṆA

Summary—Having shown in the previous chapter that all shines as Brahman, the author summarizes the five previous chapters of Sthiti Prakaraṇa.

Persons born with Sattvaguṇa live on earth with Brahmic effulgence, like the moon shining in Ākāśa. They do not groan under a load of pain. Does the golden lotus fold its petals with the approach of the night? They concern themselves with nothing but their present actions. They tread the path of the wise men of rare intelligence. With a non-fluctuating mind, their hearts full, they are engaged in noble thoughts. They rejoice in the possession of

amity, grace and other good qualities. Persons of such innate good qualities are indifferent to high and low stations of life. They look with equal eye upon all and are virtuously disposed. Like the ocean, they never go beyond their bounds. They are without delusion and, like the sun, never trespass the strict law.

What is fit to be accepted and acted up to is the quality of the stainless; what should be shunned is the path of the sinful. After having inquired into the nature of the universe, one should consider it as an object of indifference. He should thoroughly sift the nature of 'I' with the aid of his Guru and his own intelligence and become clear-minded. Utmost pain and effort should be undergone on the path of knowing Ātman. The mind should be perfectly controlled in the due acting of worldly affairs. Association should be made with the virtuous. The idea of 'I' has to be rejected. That which should be shunned is the delusion caused by this body composed of bones, muscles, etc. That which should be seen (and worshipped) is Parabrahman which pervades all bodies. From the sun journeying in the car drawn by his green horses down to the vermin of the earth, Jñāna alone shines. Through our own actions, we acquire different births in which one of the three Guṇa-s, Sattva, Rajas or Tamas predominates. But it is only through Sāttvic action that the supreme Mokṣa is reached. Thus did Vasiṣṭha address Rāmacandra.

V. UPASĀNTI PRAKARAṆA

1. THE STORY OF KING JANAKA

Summary—Having shown in the previous chapter that the play of Cit (consciousness) alone shines as this universe, the author, through the nine stories related in this Prakaraṇa, declares that this universe as universe never is.

According to the above-mentioned words of Muni Kaca, son of the Devaguru Bṛhaspati, all the universes are of the nature of Ātma-jñāna only. The delusion of birth and death only haunts those persons who have Rajas and Tamas (Guṇa-s). But persons of powerful Sāttvic tendency like yourself will be free from the fear of births. Such Sāttvic men liberate themselves from the trammels of Māyā, like a serpent casting off one by one its sloughs.

Having realized that all are Brahman and the 'I' is that Brahman only, you should destroy the idea that the 'I' and the universes are different. The created objects arising out of Brahma-jñāna, the cause, do not really exist, like the foam in an ocean. There are no such things as pleasure and pain, birth and death, or persons whirling in the vortex of birth and death; one only Principle, that always is, endures.

Having tasted all things through experience and inference, do not grieve for them. Do not think of the past or of the future; but remain in that non-dual state with the transcendent Sattva-guṇa and without the dualities of desire, hatred, etc. With an equal eye to all, with the certitude of conviction in Ātma-jñāna, with extreme quiescence and a mind silent to all worldly objects, may you, Oh Rāma, be free of all pain, with a mind as transparent as crystal. In the last birth after which there is no more rebirth, Ātma-jñāna will dawn in one easily. Will the resplendent bamboo pearls be found in other than bamboo clusters? In such persons, who will not be re-born again, are found nobleness, benevolence, love, clearness of intellect and all the qualities of a Jīvan-mukta and an Ātma-jñānin. The good qualities of these great beings, who walk on this noble path, will attract all persons, like the melody of a bamboo flute captivating the hearts even of cows.

There are two¹ kinds of paths leading to Mokṣa. If without fail, one were to follow the path laid down by an Ācārya, delusion would wear away from him little by little and emancipation will result, either in the very birth of his initiation by his Guru or in some succeeding birth. On the other path, the mind, being fortified with a stainless, spontaneous knowledge, ceaselessly meditates upon it; and then there arises true

¹ Of the two paths to Jñāna, a person is guided by a Guru on one, and on the other, he is guided by himself.

Jñāna, like a fruit falling unexpectedly from above. Now listen attentively to a story that I shall relate to you, in which Tattva-jñāna arose in an individual like a fruit in the Ākāśa.

Once a king of kings reigned over this universe, who never at any time laboured under fear of his foes. He was exceedingly wealthy and liberal. He wielded the sceptre over a country called Videha in which was no evidence of jealousy or envy. This king, by the name of Janaka, rejoiced in the possession of good qualities vast as the ocean which fitted him to protect his subjects, like Viṣṇu. In the beautiful season of spring, with great joy of heart, this king stepped into his divine garden, fragrant with sweet smelling flowers, while his courtiers, armies and others were stationed outside. Perambulating the garden alone, the king heard the songs of Siddha-s whose minds had attained the one Cit. Oh Rāma, listen attentively to the songs heard by Janaka, containing the experiences of the Siddha hosts residing on the fragrant hills, who had withdrawn themselves from the pleasure of visible things. They are: 'That Jñāna-bliss which arises out of the merging of the knower and the known is of Ātma-jñāna. And it is this Ātma-jñāna bliss that should be longed after.' So sang one Siddha. Another Siddha sang: 'After eradicating the seen and the visual with their Vāsanā-s, one should contemplate the Ātmic Reality which is the primeval Light to the eagle vision (of high spiritual personages).' A third Siddha intoned: 'After having

become all-pervading like that one which occupies the neutral centre between Sat and Asat, we should ever contemplate the Ātma-jñāna, that eternal Light which illuminates all other lights.' Still another Siddha sang: ' We will contemplate that effulgent Ātma-jñāna which calls itself ' I ' in all Jīva-s.'

Other Siddha-s also chimed forth: ' To look for the God without, relinquishing the God within, is like going in quest of conch shells after discarding the Kaustubha¹ gem on hand. Ātman can be attained only by those who have destroyed completely the hosts of desires. Those who, in spite of their knowledge of the absence of happiness both in the past and the present in the baneful objects (of the world), yet entangle themselves in them, their thoughts clinging to them, deserve the appellation of ass, if not a worse one. The serpents, Indriya-s (sense-organs); which are hissing again and again, should be slain in the seat of the mind by the rod of firm discrimination, just as Indra reduced to dust the mountains through his irresistible Vajra (thunderbolt). A mind, devoid of pain, which has developed equal vision over all through quiescence, will attain the state of Ātmic Reality which is complete bliss. This is Mokṣa.' So sang many Siddha-s. Having heard clearly these sage counsels emanating from the Siddha-s, Janaka became panic-stricken, like a serpent stunned by the sound of an angry Garuḍa (eagle). He left his cool,

¹ This is the gem said to be shining on the breast of Viṣṇu.

pleasure garden for his mansion, and dismissed his minister and other attendants.

Having closeted himself in a cool room in the topmost storey of his mansion, he began to contemplate the true significance of the words spoken by the Siddha-s. Observing the actions of the world where men flutter like birds on their wing and then perish, he could no longer contain himself and cried out as follows: 'Being hemmed in on all sides and whirling in different conditions in this restless world, I am ever under delusion and afflicted by pain, like a speck of dust floating in the midst of dust. Reflecting upon Time which is eternal (in its true nature), I cannot but term as a moment the hundred years of my life. This being so, how is it I estimate my life greatly and fall into despondency through my potent desires? Who is there so debased in life as myself, who am spoiled by my gross mind? Fie on the uneven life, which cannot be considered as of any moment. Comparing this earth over which I rule with the countless universes, I cannot but consider it as an atom. It is surprising that I should rate high this universe, full of pain. I am unable to find one object in it which is uncreate, sweet and beneficent for even one twinkling of the eye. It is really marvellous to see the heterogeneities of the universe. Even the greatest of persons will in course of time become the lowest of the low. Oh my mind, which fancies as real the ephemeral wealth of this world, whence these illusory thoughts of thine?

Enjoyments, great men and their kindred have appeared in former times. Where then is certitude of existence for objects now? The innumerable earths, with their rulers and their wealth, have all disappeared like fine sand; the Devaloka-s with their Indra-s and wealth in the sky above have vanished like fish; no limit can be imposed upon the number of universes, Brahma-s, mundane eggs and Jīva-s that have come and gone. Oh afflicting mind, where are all the objects that have vanished out of sight? Where then is permanency of existence for you? It is only by expending my desires on the illusion of bodily existence in the dark night of Māyā that I have descended to this ignorant state. Enough, enough of the deaths I have undergone. I have not been able to find that beneficent Kāla (time) which does not put an end to objects. Not one beneficent object exists on this earth, either in the beginning, middle or end. Are not all created objects coated over with the varnish of destruction? Every day of their lives, the ignorant enact with their body sinful acts, painful deeds and unlimited vices. In youth, they are enveloped with Ajñāna; in adult age, they are entangled in the meshes cast by women; in old age, groaning under the burden of Saṃsāra, they die. Being thus always occupied, when will they find time to devote themselves to the performance of virtuous deeds? How came this Māyā to play and dance in this world? This ghost of my mind dances in the theatre of this universe to the music of the organs.

‘Asat is perched on the crown of Sat. Similarly, Adharma or pain is ever seated on the crown of the illuminated Dharma in this universe. If pain is seated on the crown of (or is the necessary accompaniment of) pleasure, how can we discriminate between them and find out the stainless? If in the opening and the closing of the eyelids, many Brahmā-s are created and destroyed, what am I, a puny self, before them? Marvellous wealth becomes a source of pain and affliction of the mind; even an object of infinite danger is a source of great happiness when the mind is rightly directed. It is the terrible Saṃsāric life that is the source of all pain. How can happiness be generated in those lives which are drowned in Saṃsāra? The deluded mind is the root of the tree of Saṃsāra, of Ajñāna, which ramifies in all directions with branches full of flowers, tendrils, fruits, etc. It is this mind which is called Saṃkalpa. With the destruction of Saṃkalpa, the mind will also be destroyed easily. The baneful root of mind being destroyed, the tree of birth and death will also be destroyed. Oh, I have detected the thief who robbed me of my Ātmic jewel, my self. His name is Manas (mind). I have been suffering long through this villain. I will now kill him and make him die.

‘Till now I have not been able to bore a hole in this pearl of mind. Now I will do so and make a rosary of it by stringing it on the string of experience and wear it on my person. I have learnt this from the omniscient Siddha-s, as my Guru. I am now in the

enjoyment of that bliss which pertains to the pure Brahman. I have gradually dispelled from my mind such unrealities as "I", "you" and other differences of conception. I will never hereafter bring them back to my mind. I am now victorious in the conflict with my great adversary, the mind, which prevented my Ātma-jñāna. I have completely divested myself of the pain which afflicted me. I have attained the life of quiescence. Oh, discriminative Jñāna, which lifted me up to this lofty state, I adore thee.'

Thus King Janaka remained statue-like in Samādhi, after having destroyed all fluctuations of mind. After being in Samādhi for a long time, he returned from it and then surveyed the universe through his quiescent mind, his impure mind having been destroyed past resurrection, and made the following remarks: 'What object is there in this world for me to accomplish? What is illusory? To my present scrutiny all is pure Jñāna only. I cognize nothing but the one immaculate Ātma-jñāna, my own Reality. I will never long for any object I do not come across; nor will I evince any aversion towards any object that I come by. I will remain immutably fixed in my own Self of Ātma-jñāna. Things will happen as preordained.' So saying, the king was absorbed in Brahmic bliss in the non-dual state.

Just as the effulgent sun in the Ākāśa causes days, etc. to happen without any volition or desire on their part, so also Janaka contemplated performing spontaneously every day, without any longing, all the actions of his life. So never for a moment ruminating upon

the past or future, productive as they are of evil, he began at once to do his present actions with a full heart. Only through the Ātmic inquiry produced by the words of the Siddha-s, did Janaka attain quiescence of mind and Ātma-jñāna. Oh lotus-eyed Rāma, the supreme state of Ātma-jñāna can be attained only through Ātmic inquiry, and not through the actions done by the low-minded, without a Guru. Those with worldly inclinations long after goals other than Ātman; but the longing for extraordinary, spiritual bliss comes only through previous Ātmic efforts. Therefore one should destroy Ajñāna, the seed of the tree of existence on this earth, productive of fearful dangers and surrounded by the ocean of pain.

To the non-agitated Jñānin-s, the precious jewel of Jñāna locked in the casket of their heart will fetch, in a moment, whatever they think of, like the Kalpa tree (of Devaloka). Desire, hatred, etc. will not affect those in whom the (Ātmic) bliss has arisen through Ātmic inquiry, after the annihilation of Ajñāna, just as persons clad in diamond armour are proof against arrows. Then the dense mist of Ahaṁkāra, which having screened the Sun of Brahman obscured the intelligence, will be dispersed by the whirlwind of Jñāna. Should one aspire for the supreme Brahmic state, he should previously have killed out all desires in his mind. Is not grain obtained only after previously ploughing the field?

2. THE STORY OF PUṆYA AND PĀVANA

Summary—In this story it is sought to show that spiritual experience arises after many births only and that too with great difficulty.

The non-dual Ātma-jñāna will, if developed, cause to perish Ajñāna, which is the cause of the growth and increase of the poisonous plant called Moha (delusion), and which identifies the 'I' with the body, etc., the seat of the sovereign sway of the serpent of pain. Those who are acute enough to discern the unreality of this universe will, like King Janaka, cognize through their subtle intelligence the non-dual Paramārtha (Reality) at the proper time. But such cognition will not take place through wealth, men, (religious) actions or celestials. Those who are afraid of being born repeatedly should take refuge only in their own efforts. If with every day the base conception of the differentiation of 'he', 'I', etc. is gradually destroyed, then the expansive Jñāna which is all this universe will arise. With true discrimination arising more and more in the mind, it will be able to cognize the nature of its own Ātman.

When attraction and repulsion (towards objects) become the nature of the mind, it alone is bondage and nothing else. Having avoided desire and pain arising through intense attachment and hatred towards objects, may you be immovable, devoid of attraction or repulsion towards them.

The above-mentioned qualities will find their asylum, unaccompanied by any pain, in those wise

persons who are free from the longing for release or non-release, are without delusion, impermanence, Ajñāna, pain, actions to be done or omitted, confusion, Vikalpa, fear, contraction (of mind), enmity, blemish, baseness, violence or deceptive words.

The Vāsanā-s are the net composed of the string of powerful thoughts to catch the fishes of delusion in the ocean of existence. Having cut asunder, with the sword of Jñāna, the net of Vāsanā-s, may you have a mind as still as the clouds unaffected by winds. After having destroyed the impure mind through your pure mind, like a tree felled by an axe, may you be firmly seated in the supreme Paramapada (supreme state).

Having firmly convinced yourself of the illusory character of worldly actions, such as going and returning, waking and sleeping, standing and sitting, abandon entirely all the desires of your heart. The ignorant mind by its nature follows the course of intelligence, like a cat following a lion in the forest through desire for flesh. Again, just as through the intrepidity of a lion, another animal following it feeds on what it gets, so also the mind enjoys sensual objects obtained through its intelligence. If the mind is thus engaged with visible things, then it will never be destroyed. Hence freedom from bondage is not attained. But if visible things are renounced then destruction of the mind will ensue and thereby Nirvāṇa.

May you rest as firm rooted as Mahāmeru, without the conception of the difference of 'I' and these

(objects). May you, after rendering your mind as immaculate as the pure Ākāśa, have constant cognition of your Ātmic Reality, the Jñāna which shines above in the midst of the knower and the known that are, from the standpoint of the beneficent mind, Ātman and the universe respectively. May you be of the nature of the one Reality, after having inquired fully into the one Bliss which shines in the midst of the object and enjoyer, having rid yourself of both these. May you, without desires, cling to and rest in 'That', which ever is, in the midst of the enjoyer and the enjoyed.

It is impossible for persons beset with corroding desires to continue unsullied in this world; not so for persons bound by a mere cord. Therefore you should cut asunder the bond of desire by the destruction of Saṃkalpa. Having severed the idea of 'I' with the sword of 'non-I', may you, Oh Rāma, contemplate the Ātman and reach Mokṣa, devoid of the seven births and in a state of fearlessness.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma remarked: Thou wert pleased to say that I should destroy the desires arising from the ideation of 'I' in actions pursued. These words, when I ponder over them, are too deep for me. I might rather destroy this body, the causer, than the Ahaṃkāric conception. With the annihilation of 'I', the body will perish like a tree felled to its root. Vasiṣṭha thereupon replied: Men versed in the sacred lore state that there are two paths by which the Ahaṃkāric Vāsanā-s can be destroyed.

Instead of thinking with certainty, as we do now, that we live for objects or the objects exist for us, or that in the absence of these objects the 'I' does not exist, or that these objects do not exist in the absence of 'I'; one should, through pure inquiry, differentiate himself from the objects, with the idea that the 'I' does not belong to the objects nor the objects to the 'I'; and his mind should abandon all Vāsanā-s unfalteringly and he should perform all things, as if in sport. This is what is called *dhyeya-tyāga* (or the renunciation of what is fit to be imagined). Then, having destroyed the Vāsanā-s and looking with an equal vision over all, if one should abandon the burden of the body, such an extinction of Vāsanā-s constitutes the flawless *jñeya-tyāga* (or the renunciation of the known). Those only are the wise who have given up all the Vāsanā-s which have materialized themselves in the tangible shape of the body of Ahaṁkāra.

Those resolute persons who come under the first category are called Jīvan-mukta-s; while those who come under the second, after destroying to the root all Vāsanā-s and actions and rendering their minds completely quiescent, are called Videha-mukta-s. Oh victorious Rāma, these two kinds of renunciation resemble one another. They pertain to Jīvan-mukta-s and Videha-mukta-s respectively. They lead one to Brahman, free one from the trammels of pain and enable him to attain Mokṣa.

Those whose minds neither sink nor float amidst the pleasures and pain by which they are surrounded

are Jīvan-mukta-s. Those whose minds have not experienced (or are not affected in this life by) exultation, fear, anger, poverty, sin or pain, which arise in them through their previous destiny, are Jīvan-mukta-s. Those who are ever in a state of abstraction, with a mind rendered, while performing actions, as quiescent as in Suṣupti, and whose company is courted by the wise, are fit to be termed Jīvan-mukta-s.

When attraction towards external objects ceases, then there yet remains the internal craving which is called *tr̥ṣṇā* (thirst). But when the attraction towards objects, external as well as internal, ceases completely, then it is termed *mukta-* (freed) *tr̥ṣṇā*. The thought and longing that such and such a thing should arise for oneself is *tr̥ṣṇā*. It is this strong, golden chain of *tr̥ṣṇā* from which you should unshackle yourself. May you be in that immaculate and transcendent Ātma-jñāna Reality, after preventing conceptions of yea or nay from transcending their limits, becoming free from all desire, giving up completely all desires for liberation or bondage as well as pleasure and pain.

May you, Oh Rāma, be immovable like an ocean without foam or waves. Listen attentively to what I am now going to tell you. In the case of earnest inquirers after Ātman, there are four kinds of certitude. The first kind is that in which the 'I' identifies itself with this body, from head to foot, and thinks itself to be only what has been generated by the parent. As this idea is not real, this certitude leads to fearful bondage. The second kind of certitude arises when

the 'I' finds itself to be above and other than all (gross) objects and more subtle than the tail end of paddy. This certitude, when attained, leads to Mokṣa and arises in the case of the wise. The direct cognition within, without doubt, that the universes are but modes or aspects of 'I' and that the 'I' is indestructible is the third kind of certitude. This is the Mokṣa lacking nothing. The fourth kind of certitude arises when the perishable universe and the knower are cognized as unreal and all the 'I's ever are, like the Ākāśa, pervading everywhere. This is the incomparable and supreme Mokṣa. Of these, the first kind of certitude is associated with bondage generating *trṣṇā*. But the other three, being associated with the emancipated and pure *trṣṇā*, are to be found in Jīvan-mukta-s only. Of these, if one is impressed by the incomparable certitude that all things are no other than the 'I', then the mind will be unaffected by pleasure or pain. All being one, the Void, Prakṛti, Māyā, Brahman, the Light of Cīṭ, Intelligence, the immaculate Puruṣa, Ātman, Īśa (Lord) and Śiva—all these can be termed Parabrahman itself. It is Brahmic Śakti (potency) that, sporting in the creation of this universe, brings about numberless differentiations in it. This incomparable Śakti residing in the non-dual Brahman exists through its impartite nature and then flourishes (manifold). Therefore, Oh Rāma, banish from your mind all thought of differentiations of 'I' or 'thou', birth or death, pleasure or pain in objects or actions. Those persons who, being, above all,

concentrate their attention upon the supreme state with a calm mind, unaffected by pleasure or pain, never subject themselves to the trammels of rebirth. Those persons who, following the footsteps of the ancients, show the same leniency and mercy towards both their friends of virtuous deeds and their enemies of vicious deeds, will never render themselves liable to the trammels of rebirth. Such persons will never think of nobility or lowness; will never have attachment or hatred; will not be obliged to do or not to do; will not be under the compulsion of rebirth. Shining with divine effulgence, they speak lovingly to all. Knowing the true properties of all objects, they are free from rebirth.

Therefore, Oh Rāma, sport in this world after attaining the Ātmic Reality in a state of Jīvan-mukti when the Dhyeya Vāsanā-s are given up and the illumined vision takes place. Dally, Oh Rāma, in this world as you list, conforming to the external observances of life while internally you are Cidākāśa itself. Be devoid of false desires, attractions of life and Vāsanā-s. Amuse yourself, Oh Rāma, in this world, commencing and ending only in the external actions of the world but not in the solitary mind, thus seeming to perform actions in the world while they are not performed within. Amuse yourself, Oh Rāma, in this world according to your free will, after having differentiated 'I' from the body and destroyed thereby all Ahaṃkāric ideas, and rendered the mind as immaculate as the Ākāśa without stains and diverse

characteristics. Amuse yourself freely, Oh Rāma, in this world, with perfect liberality of spirit, without undertaking the difficult observances of life, yet understanding the rationale of all things. Oh Rāma, live in this world with acute intelligence and non-desire, full within but seeming to be ardent and impetuous without, as if prompted by Karman in the performance of actions, even whilst you are unattached within.

Do not in the least contemplate, Oh Rāma, such unrealities as distinctions of friend or foe, 'thou' or 'I'. Such is the case of those only who, having paltry, impure minds, are engaged in fruitless endeavours. But to the wise, this whole world is their near kindred. It is only through the delusions of birth that persons consider one as their friend and another as their enemy. Thus is man's delusion which rejoices every moment (in this or that). But through true vision, all the universes become, at the same time, friend and enemy.

To illustrate this experience, I shall relate an ancient story which thou shalt hear. In days of old, there lived on the banks of the Gaṅgā two persons, sons of a Ṛṣi named Dīrghatapas (of long continued Tapas). These two sons who went by the names, Puṇya (Virtue) and Pāvana (Purity), lived near the incomparable Mahendra mountains and were well versed in the four Veda-s, performing great Tapas. Whilst they were performing Tapas on the banks of the Gaṅgā along with their father, the virtuous personage Puṇya attained Jñāna in course of time by the

performance of actions without being actuated by the fruits thereof. But his brother Pāvana, having attained only partial Jñāna, was fluctuating in mind like a rocking cradle, without true Jñāna, his ignorance making his mind flit everywhere. The father, after giving up all desire for sensual objects, became indifferent to mundane existence and abandoned, on the hills by the side of the Gaṅgā, his body which formed a nest for the birds of Ahaṁkāric action to nestle in. Like a carrier, bearing a burden, who takes it to a certain destination, the father, being free to unshackle himself from his body on account of the absence of desire, reached Brahmic bliss which is like the fragrance of flowers permeating the whole atmosphere.

As soon as the body of this Sāttvic Muni, who had reached his Ātmic Reality which is actionless, is without the pain of the universe and is the state where there is the dawning of the ancient Jñāna, expired, his consort breathed her last like a bee deserting a lotus flower. The eldest son Puṇya, finding both parents dead, who were like eyes to him, began to devise measures for the performance of obsequies in accordance with established usage, while his brother Pāvana began to drown in the ocean of sorrow, exclaiming, 'Oh my dear mother, Oh my dear father, how shall I bear this burden of grief? Where shall I go?' Having grown quite agitated and unsettled, like a person treading flames, he roved throughout the forest. He was not able to control his grief even in the presence of his calm brother and became quite enfeebled in mind.

But the elder brother, who was not in the least dispirited, being quite convinced that it is natural for even lightning-like (subtle) bodies to fade away, performed the funeral rites without the least flurry.

After all the Vedic rites were duly conducted, Puṇya, of full Jñāna, addressed his brother who was yelling aloud with his mouth wide open, in the following manner: 'How is it, my boy, that you have not as yet overcome the grief which harrows you. Listen to my description of the transcendent state which our father and mother have reached. It can be called that Mokṣa which is incapable of either repletion or depletion, which is its own place and which is its own self. It is the goal to which all tend. It is the Tāttvic Reality of all Jñānin-s. Is it wise, my brother, for you to wail, on your parents attaining their own true state? Is there any limit to the number of fathers and mothers or of wives and sons that you have had in the many incarnations you underwent previously, like the countless pitfalls in a river-bed. One may rather count the number of fruits yielded by the trees of a vast forest in the fruit-bearing season than the many relatives which one has had during previous births. And if we begin to wail on their behalf, do you think, brother, a Kalpa will suffice for exhausting our grief? The torrent of mirage-waters (undulatory waves) rushing in the season called Vāsanā-s over the mirage valley which is the formless Ajñāna, sweeps along its current the hills of pleasure and pain and dashes on without limit or hindrance. This universe which has arisen

in the form of wife and other relatives, foes and kindred, love and hatred, nobleness and lowness as well as other pairs, exists and expands by virtue of its name and form only and nothing else. Think of one as a good friend of yours and there the thing is created as a reality. Think of him as your foe and then also the mind projects the thought into an actuality. Like the properties of murderous poison or rejuvenating nectar which accomplish their ends, so also, if once bondage-giving thoughts are completely destroyed, they are never resurrected from their grave. How can we attribute enmity or friendship to the intelligence in diverse forms arising from the one Ātman? If we begin to inquire as to who are in the tabernacle (of the body) which is nothing but a network of bones filled with flesh, blood and skin and which, though non-existent, deludes us with an apparently real existence, then what remains is this. "I". Then contemplating still further, we find through Brahmic vision which is gradually developed, that neither you nor I, neither Puṇya nor Pāvana; nor anyone else exists, except the one Jñāna which shines alone. In the many Dvīpa-s (islands) long passed out of existence, the births you underwent are innumerable. - In the great Dvīpa called Jambū, you were born as a cuckoo, as beasts, clouds, hills, trees, reptiles and birds; the series of births you had in them and in each of those subdivisions are indescribable. Such being the case, why do you not now grieve over the deaths of those who were related to you in those many incarnations? Nay,

this is not all. Listen again to the repeated birth you had in other countries. In the countries of Kosala, Daśārṇa, Pauṇḍra, Gurjara, Tuṣāra, Koṅkaṇas Kekaya and Sālva, you were born as king, monkey, vermin, stag, water-crow, birds, serpent, ass, etc. Now, why do you not bewail the death of those departed relatives also whom you created then through your Vāsanā-s? In lieu of counting the parents of many individuals born on this earth, we may rather reckon the number of dried leaves withering on a large forest tree. Therefore there are no grounds for you, my boy, to grieve. Without a faltering heart, may you attain your Ātmic Reality which has no existence or non-existence, birth or death, and cognize it firmly through your mind. Having freed yourself of all pain and Ajñāna, may you cognize, through your intelligence, your Ātmic Reality *per se*. In that spiritual introvision, many kinds of desire will spring to retard your progress. Free yourself from their trammels, make the lotus of your heart as pure as possible. Then all illusions will vanish completely and you, my brother, will attain Nirvāṇic Bliss.'

So said Vasiṣṭha to Śrī Rāma.

3. THE STORY OF THE GREAT BALI

Summary—Having in the previous story shown that withdrawal of the mind from visible things to the seer

leads one to cognize his own Reality, the author illustrates through this story the fact that through the performance of Niṣkāma-karman even sensual bliss is transmuted into Brahmic bliss.

The heart of Pāvana became illumined with the Jñāna into which he was initiated by his brother, the Muni Puṇya, like the universe shining with light at sunrise. Then both these Siddha-puruṣa-s who had attained Ātma-jñāna were living in that forest. Spending their lives according to their sweet will and pleasure, they passed a long time and at last reached that quiescent state of Videha-mukti, which is like a light when it is divested of wick and ghee. Similar is the fate of all Jīva-s after they die in this world.

If one person in his many incarnations is related to all, where is the necessity for loving or hating any? Therefore the best course is to give up the load of desires and not to enlarge it. If desire is allowed to grow, then it becomes the fuel for the fire of Cintana (thought). In the absence of the fuel of desire, Saṃkalpa-s also perish. This is a true statement, not mere theorizing.

Oh puissant Rāma, mount upon the great car of Dhyeya-tyāga and behold; through the transcendent spiritual vision, this paltry universe palpitating with desire, and then you will not lack anything. This state is the certain truth of Brahman that is without impurity, delusions or the disease (of Ajñāna). If this state is attained without doubt, then persons will not

be subject to delusions, though they are without much intelligence. Therefore, Oh Śrī Rāma, lead your life thus.

With the intimate friendship (or development) of right intelligence and keen discrimination, all pain will cease. Even though one may find refuge in a person (who is a Guru), it is only through one's own energy and will that he can destroy the pain arising from association with diverse objects and kinsmen. Having laboured hard through Vairāgya, Jñāna books and the noble qualities of benevolence, etc. if your mind is made to follow the Ātmic life, then all pain will cease. Not even the happiness arising from the collective wealth of the three worlds can in any way bear comparison with the bliss of a mind that has reached Kaivalya (emancipation).

Like a shoe which is able to protect the foot wherever its wearer goes, so also the mind fills the whole universe with ambrosial bliss when it becomes all full. A mind filled with non-attachment will never sink into desire; but a mind filled with desire never has its grievances redressed completely. Compared to a desireless mind which yields pure thoughts as easily as Muni Agastya sipped¹ in one sip the waters of the ocean, even the full moon is not so bright; nor is the milky ocean yielding bliss so full; nor will the radiant face of Lakṣmī, residing on the fragrant lotus,

¹ When Indra wanted to conquer his enemy Vṛtra who was hiding in the waters of the ocean, Agastya sipped the waters in one sip.

bestow (upon her devotees) such a boon (as this desireless mind).

The ghost of desire spoils the lustre of the pure mind, just as clouds envelop the moon or black stains tarnish a polished, white floor. Mokṣa means nothing but the destruction of the impurities of the mind—which mind is developed only when all desires and fear of rebirth are destroyed. If this is not possible, namely controlling desires, etc. thou shalt, Oh Rāma, be able to attain Jñāna through the path followed by the great Bali through his intelligence.

At which Rāma asked to be enlightened about the nature of that course. To which Vasiṣṭha of rare Tapas replied: There once lived a matchless king of Asura-s named Bali who reigned over Pātāla like an emperor. He made the whole world tremble beneath his potent arms and was able to overpower and humiliate even Īśvara, Viṣṇu, etc. He was the son of the noble Virocana and reigned powerfully for ten crores of years. Having ascended the topmost storey of his palace, adorned with many windows and ornamented with gems brought from the Mahāmeru heights, and surrounded by guards, when alone, he reflected with a mind disgusted with the material pleasures of Saṃsāra: 'Of what avail is this undisputed sovereignty of mine which has enabled me to enjoy since long the incomparable wealth of all the three worlds? When I begin to contemplate the pleasures of wealth which flit away from wherever and whosoever enjoyed them in the past, I find I am only

repeating the same actions as yesterday, yielding but momentary happiness. Enjoyed things recur again. Things seen yesterday again present themselves today. Ornaments worn with exultation yesterday are again donned by us. And yet we find that even intelligent persons do not become disgusted with them and are not ashamed to enjoy them again and again. Like ignorant children who taste again and again sweetmeats which impart sweetness for the time being alone, we are also afflicted, ignorant of the true path. Days, fortnights, years and Yuga-s pass in cycles and nothing new arises. In spite of the performance of all my duties, how have they in any way improved my life? Through what shall I be able to come into the indubitable possession of that, reaching which I shall be actionless? What is that path which will enable me to go higher up to "That" which is free from illusory, sensual objects?

Then in order to find the path which leads to that Principle which is indestructible and alien to objects, he reflected deeply in his mind and then he was beside himself with joy at the solution that instantaneously flashed into his mind. He poured out the following words:

'Formerly I inquired of my father, the omniscient Virocana, in this very spot and about this very point. He then explained to me the manner in which I can remove my doubts. I questioned my father thus: "What is that incomparable state where all the illusions of pleasure and pain and other heterogeneities fade away? What is that state where the mind's

delusions wear away? What is that seat where all desires are eradicated by their root? Please enlighten me with answers to these questions. Again, what is that quiescent state which is free from desires and mental despondency? What is that state which is permeated by absolute bliss? Please, Oh thou who hast cognized the Supreme, throw light upon the means by which I can free myself from the pain and excruciating doubts from which I suffer."

'To which my father replied: "Now listen to my words. There is a beautiful country which is unlimited, all-pervading and without any precincts. That is the source from which all mundane eggs arise and into which all are absorbed. In this country, there exist neither the five grand elements, nor hills, nor forests; nor holy places, nor the pure Deva-s, nor the other ancient souls. Great Luminosity is the name of the king existing there. He is omniscient, all-pervading, the cause of all and perfectly quiescent and all full. He is Silence itself. Without fail he causes all acts to be performed through the minister appointed by him. The moment the minister thought of a thing, though non-existent, it arose instantaneously as a tangible object; though existent, it disappeared mysteriously. This minister has not the power to enjoy anything of his own right; nor does he know anything by himself. As he acts always in concert with the king, he is able to do all things. Though the minister does all acts in the presence of the king, yet the latter is always alone." So said the father to his son.

‘ The son heard with an exulting heart all that his father told him and then questioned him: “ What is the nature of the resplendent country which is without mental disease and all-pervading? What are the means by which it can be reached? Through what can it be attained? Who is the imperishable king in that country and who the minister? And, who is that potent king with his minister who cannot be controlled by my puissant arms which brought under subjection, as if in sport, all the earths in this universe? ”

‘ To which the father was pleased to reply thus: “ Who will be able to overstep the rigorous law of the speedy and powerful minister? Even should countless hosts of Deva-s and Asura-s league together to overpower him, they will never be able to do so. Even though such rare weapons as discus and spear be hurled at him, their powers will be deadened like flowers aimed at a stone. When overpowered by the king, the minister will pay obeisance to him. Otherwise one can more easily move the mountains of Mahā-meru than this person. He will never be completely subdued otherwise than through an intelligence with much experience and skill. If you long to get at the minister, he will hiss at you like an angry serpent and burn you. In order to remove the doubts under which you are labouring, I will now proceed to state what the king, his minister, country, etc. symbolize. The country in the story afore-mentioned stands for the incomparable and eternal Mokṣa. The king mentioned therein is the Ātmic Reality inseparable from Mokṣa

and shining with the lustre of a spotless gem. His creation (namely minister) typifies the mind (or intelligence). Supreme skill lies in the thorough eradication of sensual pleasures and the complete development of Vairāgya. When the mind is controlled by non-attachment, it resembles a rutting elephant caged within a Khedda.

“Persons unacquainted with the true Jñāna books maintain that out of the four parts into which they divide (the actions of) mind (or time), two parts should be devoted to sensual objects, a quarter to a study of Jñāna books and the remaining quarter to the worship of the really blessed Ācārya; and if that be done, Jñāna will shine in them after the removal of the darkness of Ajñāna. But those who know partially maintain that if, out of the four parts above-mentioned, one should devote two parts to the contemplation and worship of the Ācārya, a quarter to meditation upon the truths contained in Jñāna-books and the residue to the actions of the organs, Jñāna will prevail so as to cognize the Supreme Truth; while the third class, namely persons of full Jñāna, affirm that Mokṣa is easily attained by those who, dividing the mind into four parts, devote it to the four purposes of a study of the Jñāna books treating of the path of Ātmic Reality, of non-desire, of self-cognition and the path of worship of Ācārya-s. May you, through your exceeding intelligence and inquiry, master Ātmic worship and the subjugation of desires simultaneously. Through a determined subjugation of desire, Ātmic inquiry is

induced; and this Ātmic inquiry brings renunciation of desires. They are mutually dependent like the full ocean and the clouds. Having earned, in proper ways, wealth for relieving one's kindred and others without violating the rules and observances of a country, one should through that wealth resort to the wise of rare Sattvaguṇa and there attain the Vairāgya through which to develop Ātmic inquiry. When thus he is illumined with true Jñāna through Ātmic inquiry, Mokṣa is attained."

'Thus did my father enlighten me before. Through divine grace, I have been able to remember now all that my father told me and attain Jñāna thereby. Having been freed from the longing for enjoyment and coming into the possession of the wealth of non-desire, I have been rendered calm with supreme bliss by the ambrosia which is quiescence of mind. Oh, I have been in complete ignorance of this, my present bliss, for so long a period. How shall I describe it in words? This is the state in which all thoughts are absorbed and all persons suffering from the effects of pleasure and pain find an end to their suffering. This is the state reached by those who lead their lives in Ātman. This is the glory of all-quiescence.'

Having meditated within himself thus, he began to cogitate in his mind over the questions: 'Who am I?' and 'What is my real nature?' Then he reflected for a moment and concluded that if he should invoke and salute his Guru Śukrācārya who had cognized Reality and having inquired of him, should meditate

upon the truth, then all Ajñāna would cease. Therefore, with closed eyes¹ and true affection, he meditated intently upon his Guru. Then Śukrācārya, whose form was the true Saccidānanda Ākāśa, appeared before Bali wishing to attain Ātman. With enraptured heart, the king saluted him and having worshipped him with a handful of precious gems and beautiful flowers said: "Deign to hear my words prompted by thy grace, and bless me accordingly. What is there now? What is there beyond? What is that which is limited? Who am I that speak? Who are you that hear? What is this stable universe? Please favour me with adequate replies so as to remove all my doubts."

Having heard all, Śukrācārya analysed and explained them clearly to the king as follows: 'I came here on my way while speedily journeying to Devaloka containing the immortal Kalpa tree. Of what avail is it to waste my time in unnecessary words? All manifestations here before us are Jñāna only; all that are now external to us (or beyond our present perception) are Jñāna only; that which is conditioned is Jñāna; that which is not conditioned is Jñāna also; I that speak am Jñāna; you that hear are Jñāna; and all the universe is nothing but the all-full Jñāna. This in brief is the Truth. Being impressed with this conclusion in your mind, may you meditate upon the one Reality of Jñāna with the intelligence that is requisite for it. If without any modifications of the

¹ Here Śukrācārya was summoned by Bali by mental will.

mind, you cognize and perceive it, then you will attain your goal, the supreme state. Now have the Saptarṣi-s of rare Tapas entered newly upon a divine mission (or into a new state). Therefore we shall pass.' So saying Śukra retired.

Thereafter, the king fell to meditating upon the universe and becoming convinced of the truth of the words of his Ācārya, exclaimed thus: 'This supreme earth is no other than Jñāna; the three Loka-s are Jñāna; my real nature is Jñāna; all the ordained Karman-s are Jñāna only. I have now become that resplendent Brahmic One which shines in its real nature, devoid of visible things. I have now become that all-full Principle which, being of the nature of Jñāna without any objects to bind it, pervades all objects at one and the same time and is the quiescent Jñānākāśa and intelligence itself.' Then contemplating (or uttering) mentally Praṇava (Om) which is the real significance of the absolute Jñāna, he entered trance-like into the Dhyāna (meditative) state and then freed from Saṃkalpa-s, Karman-s, the three kinds of desire (for wife, sons and wealth), doubts, thought, intelligence and objects, as well as their substratum; the knower, he remained statue-like in Samādhi for a long period, like the light of a lamp in a windless place. He shone as the absolute Sat without attachment and hatred and with a replete mind, in a state which can best be likened to a clear sky in the autumnal season, when no clouds obscure it.

While the emperor passed thus his days in Samādhi, the courtiers serving under him repaired to the topmost

storey of the king's mansion in search of him. There they found him in Nirvikalpa Samādhi. After a long time, he awoke and began to perform his regal duties with a mind free of desires and egoism. Having a pure mind, he was never flurried in adversity or prosperity; he neither sank nor swam amidst pleasure and pain. Thus had he an equal eye on all.

However unlimited the armies of good and bad thoughts that cropped up unceasingly in his mind, however countless the objects, imaginary and real, that manifested themselves before him, yet he was able to control them all in one centre. So also, shall you, Oh Rāma, pinion your mind, roving amidst the pleasures of this world and the higher, in the centre of your heart. In whatever places your mind totters like a child and sinks into sensual objects, from that place shall the mind have to be lifted up to the partless Jñāna and be made to attain it. Having made this a regular practice, may you bind this terrible elephant of the mind so as to be untouched by pain and enable it to reach Mokṣa through discrimination.

4. THE STORY OF PRAHLĀDA

Summary—This story illustrates the theory that through the grace of Īśvara also the higher spiritual state can be attained.

Now hearken again to another story. We shall now proceed to describe how one named Prahlāda also attained the true Self of Jñāna through his intelligence. After his father Hiranyakaśipu,¹ the king of Dānava-s, expired, the sorely grieved son gave expression to the following: 'Countless were the numbers of Dānava-s born in my race, such as my father and others. They had bodies which cast into insignificance even Mahā-meru itself. They were able to make or unmake even the lotus-born Brahmā with his powers. But they fell easy victims to the fiery ire of Viṣṇu wearing the Tulasī (the holy basil) garland, like cotton before the wind. Such Dānava-s, in numbers exceeding the fine sands of a river, perished like hills pulverized by the fierce gales of wind at the end of time. There is none now who is not afraid of Viṣṇu. There is only one means of conquering the effulgent Viṣṇu, my enemy wearing the discus. Think however we may, there is no higher goal than this. The real refuge can be sought only in Viṣṇu residing in the ocean of milk. Therefore let my mind from this moment seek asylum in the seat of Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu). May I, through devotional meditation, be "He" and inseparable from Him. May the grand Mantra *Om namo Nārāyaṇāya*,² which confers upon its devotees whatever they long for, be inextricably interwoven and mingled within me, like

¹ He was the son of Kaśyapa and Diti and subjected his son Prahlāda to untold cruelties for which he was torn to pieces by Viṣṇu as Narasiṃha Avatāra.

² This is called the eight-syllabled Mantra.

the Ākāśa pervaded by the wind. Those who salute and worship Viṣṇu will be able to attain the desired result of emancipation only when they meditate upon Viṣṇu as themselves. Otherwise such results will not accrue. Following that path, I will worship and meditate upon Viṣṇu as myself. This body is no other than the form (or manifestation) of Viṣṇu. He who is bound by this body in the form of Prāṇa-vāyu is Viṣṇu, the supreme of the supreme. That which goes before Prāṇa-vāyu abides externally as the second Viṣṇu. Therefore, collecting mentally all articles of worship, I shall always worship Viṣṇu.' With this purpose in view, he created with his mind jewelled vessels, incense, lamps, waving lights, golden cloths, rubied ornaments, unfading golden flowers, nectar-like food and numerous other articles of worship and then worshipped Viṣṇu with their aid. From that time onward, he worshipped the feet of Viṣṇu, the one partless Brahman. Thereafter, all the Dānava-s bearing axes began like Prahlāda to be the slaves of Hari (Viṣṇu) abandoning their bad qualities. Are not thus the qualities (good or bad) of a king imbibed by his subjects?

Thus the Asura-s, sons of Diti,¹ and their king Prahlāda, after giving up their anger against Viṣṇu, became his devout followers. Indra and the other Deva-s marvelled with fear at this unprecedented

¹ Daitya-s, sons of Diti, and Dānava-s, sons of Danu, are both Asura-s, through Kaśyapa, their father,

event and were sceptical as to how these vicious personages were able to secure the love of Viṣṇu. Therefore they went to Viṣṇu, sleeping his long (Yoga) sleep in the sea of milk, and having seen and eulogized him, addressed him thus:

‘ If all the Daitya-s of fiery nature, after meditating upon thee, become merged in thee, then there cannot but be Māyā everywhere. The murderous tendencies of the powerful Daitya-s are diametrically opposed to the extinction of rebirths in Samsāra or devotion to Viṣṇu. To say that extremely wicked persons merge into the virtuous qualities is nothing but empty words. Oh all-permeating Viṣṇu, will it be possible for all Caṇḍālā-s (outcastes) to be filled with devotion towards thee? ’

These words of the Deva-s were answered by our Lord Viṣṇu thus: ‘ Oh Deva-s, do not be afraid. The victorious Prahlāda has rendered himself no more liable to rebirth. Freed from his murderous propensities, he has reached Mokṣa through his Tattva-jñāna vision. Therefore do not suppose that there is any deception practised by him. If good persons incline their minds towards vice, then manifold evils will ensue; but if the vicious incline towards the virtuous path, then incalculable good will result. Therefore may all of you fare well.’ With this blessing, the great Viṣṇu disappeared. Thereupon all the Deva-s left the milky ocean full of surging waves for Suvarloka, and there became friendly with their former antagonists, the Dānava-s. With unceasing devotion, towards the

Lord, the calming effect of which infiltrated deep into his heart, Prahlāda was filled with a rapturous and ever-increasing love and always worshipped Him. Through the steady application of his organs in such worship, supreme discrimination, bliss, indifference towards objects, etc. were greatly developed. But his mind did not become quiescent owing to the attraction of sensual objects.

Finding that the mind of the beneficent Prahlāda was swinging like a cradle between the cognition of the all-full Reality and the enjoyment of sensual pleasures, Viṣṇu, the lord of the three worlds, manifested himself in the solitary, worshipping seat (namely the heart of Prahlāda) from which prayers were offered through his mind and acquainted him with his visit, when the lord of the Asura-s doubled his worship to the Primeval Cause of the Trinity and eulogized him thus with true love: 'Oh thou, the original seat of all rare things in the incomparable mansion of the three worlds; Oh thou, the ever-resplendent Brahman without the dawning and the setting of the sun in thee; Oh thou who art the eye of mercy to all thy votaries, salutations, salutations, a thousand salutations to thee. Oh thou who art Jñāna itself with Līlā (thy consort) beside thee to create the world; Oh thou beneficent Principle, who dost not depend for thy existence upon the fourteen worlds;¹ Oh thou who slept the sleep of

¹ Besides the seven Loka-s, Bhū, Bhūvar, etc. there are the seven Tala-s, Atala, Vitala, etc. up to Pātāla.

Yoga on the banyan tree;¹ Oh thou who art the Tattva (Reality), the prototype of all grace and the lord of all earths, salutations, salutations, a thousand salutations to thee. Oh thou who art the blighting frost to the lotus containing the petals of malevolent Asura-s; Oh thou who art the sun to the full-blown lotus of Deva-s walking on the path of the Veda-s; Oh thou who art the bee in the grand lotus of the heart of those who have destroyed all ideas of heterogeneity; Oh thou who art the Lord of all souls, salutations, salutations, a thousand salutations to thee.'

At these various eulogies of Prahlāda, Viṣṇu with gladsome look deigned to speak thus: 'Oh Prahlāda of true love, thou art free to demand of me a boon which will not make thee subject to the trammels of rebirth.'

To which Prahlāda said: 'O thou Supreme Principle residing in the hearts of all, please vouchsafe to confer on me that bliss wherein there is no pain.'

Thereupon Viṣṇu blessed him by laying his lotus-like hand upon his head with these words: 'May the final Ātmic inquiry arise in thee in order that thou mayest attain quiescence in the bliss of the pure Para-brahman; after thy mind is freed from the delusions of the world.'

Thereupon the immaculate Viṣṇu retired from the spot at which Prahlāda of great discrimination paid

¹ Allusion is here made to Viṣṇu arising on the waters on a banyan leaf at the beginning of a creation.

him respects by eulogizing him and showering flowers on him. After Puruṣottama (the supreme of all Puruṣa-s) disappeared like a wave in the vast ocean, the king of Dānava-s seated himself in the Padma posture and after having uttered the praises of the Lord, soliloquized: ‘The incomparable Lord has deigned to bless me with the Ātmic inquiry enabling one to overcome rebirth. Let me cogitate upon the questions, “Who am I?” “What was I before?” “What is the nature of this ‘I’, which identifying itself with the phenomena of this world (and body), stays and runs, cries and laughs, exults and is afflicted?” I am not this diverse world. How can this inert world be called the “I”, as the former is external to the latter and is composed of hills, stones, pretty things, earth, trees, etc.? Neither can the ephemeral body be called the “I”, as it proceeds from Asat only, is inert and has locomotion through Prāṇa-vāyu. Nor is the property of sound this “I”, since this property is impermanent, issues out of the void, has no form or intelligence and feeds the ear with its paltry substance. Nor is the property of touch this “I”, since the former cannot be perceived except through the skin, perishes in a moment without any real existence, and is without intelligence, being guided by the all-pervading Jñāna. Nor is the property of taste this “I”, since the former is ever changing, inert, full of desires, perishable in a moment, the food of the tongue arising out of material things. Nor is the inert property of form this “I”, which dies in the “knower” who, though acting in this perishable

world of sight, is yet no participator in it. Nor is the property of odour this "I", since the former is perceived through the inert nose only and is itself inert. Now have I cognized my Reality as shining both within and without, as the one pure Jñāna of pure Sat, without rebirth, being freed from all ideas of "I" and "mine", from all Saṃkalpa-s, the delusions of the five organs, and despondency of heart. This is certain. Ha, Ha, now have I known my true Self. Is this the Ātmic Reality which shines, on the path of spiritual knowledge, in the intelligence of one divested of all diversities? In the one Tattva-jñāna which is no other than the "I" pervading everywhere without fluctuation, all the universes shine from the sun down to a pot. Like sparks of fire which shine through the heat in the burning fire, so I find, in my present illumined state, that all the organs perform diverse actions through me only. All Jīva-s from Brahmā downwards will shine as my Reality alone in the one space at the end of a Kalpa when the universe goes into Pralaya; how then can the ideas of "I" or "he" which pertain to the mind exist? How can "I", which now shines as the one full Jñāna throughout this illimitable universe, possess the modifications of this reasoning mind, with a seat allotted to it in the body. Therefore my spiritual vision of Jñāna which is eternal, blissful and incomparable is in all the worlds. All the manifested appearances are only the spiritual vision of the one subtle ideation. As all Jīva-s are but "I", the

invisible Jñāna and Pratyagātman that has no other object than itself to lean upon, I offer salutations to them all on account of (their non-divisibility from) my own Self.

‘ Out of the differenceless Jñāna which has no thoughts other than its Self, which is pure, equal in all, without difference, beyond and without the three divisions of time (past, present and future), arose the diverse, transcendental potencies (Śakti-s). Nought else is but the non-dual Jñāna which is without attraction to any, equal unto itself alone. If imperishable non-desire should fill one, invisible and pure and yet like the illusory, worldly things, then there will be equal vision of all, like a waveless ocean. But a mind whirling in action associated with activity and passivity will be bound, like a bird caught in a net. Therefore all persons who are afflicted with attachment and hatred, and are therefore dizzy in mind, cling to this earth like vermin.

‘ O Thou illumined dweller in the mind of all souls, I have been able to attain Thee only after a very long period. Who has been able to come by this all-full benefit except those who have attained Thee? Thou art fit to be inquired into through the holy sentences of the Veda-s and Guru-s. Thou art the identity of Kūṭastha and Brahman. Thou art devoid of all differences. Thou shinest with the nature of Saccidānanda. Many salutations to Thee who art “That” into which all things merge. Thou art the eternal Jñāna wherein “I” am “Thou” and “Thou” art “I”. Prostrations to thee my Lord, the

Paramātmān who is self-existent and the Lord of Deva-s in this mundane egg. Prostrations to thee of the nature of light, unobscured by low thoughts, like a full moon without clouds to dim it. Prostrations to myself who have attained its Reality, shining as itself in a blissful state and as the one Cidākāśa without the obscuration of thoughts. Though seeming to be mobile or immobile or quiescent, it is yet without such actions. Though performing all actions, it is yet without desire for them. Like the breeze fanning the soft tendrils, this Jñānātman causes the Antaḥkaraṇa (lower mind) having Manas, etc. to move. Like a team of horses led by a charioteer, He alone ever urges the organs to work. It is He who is sought after by the bodies and organs. It is He who is praised by the organ of speech. It is He who is meditated upon by the mind. It is He who causes birth and death to be bridged over. It is He who can be easily attained. It is He who can cognize all. It is He who is the bee producing the humming sound¹ in the heart-lotus of all creatures. I have no love or hatred of sensual enjoyments. Let me attain those things which I am destined to have; let me not long after those things which I am not destined to have. Originally I became oblivious of discrimination and other blissful things through my inimical Ajñāna, but now I am in possession of them through Jñāna. Having destroyed my mind sunk in Saṃsāra with my

¹ This is said to be the Anāhata Śabda or the sound said to arise from the heart as stated in the Upaniṣad-s.

discrimination which laboured hard in the Śāstra-s, having freed myself from painful Ahaṃkāra, having annihilated all conceptions of duality by meditating upon non-duality, I am now the incomparable Kevala (solitary one) in an immovable state. My reality is the Kevala and all-full Jñānātman comparable only unto itself, without mental actions, egoism, Manas, or any other actions. Where has that solitary, mortal bird of Ahaṃkāra flown, freeing itself from the trammels of desire, and flying out of the cage of this body. According to the holy sentences which postulate that "Thou" art "I" and "I" am "Thou", there has been again an identification brought about between "Thou" and "I". Though possessing the whole world's wealth, Thou art yet devoid of it. Therefore Thou wilt never shine to, or be cognized by, those persons who are like the blind, unable to perceive the ravishing beauty of a fair damsel. Victory to Thee, imperishable God. Victory to Thee, the seat of final quiescence. Victory to Thee, who art beyond the reach of the Veda-s. Victory to Thee, the source of all Veda-s. Victory to Thee, the cause of creation. Victory to Thee, the causeless Cause. Victory to Thee, the perishable Cause. Victory to Thee, the imperishable Cause.'

Thus did the noble son of Hiranyakaśipu meditate with his pure mind and enjoy bliss in the supreme, differenceless, omniscient Nirvikalpa Samādhi. As he seated himself in Nirvikalpa Samādhi for 5000 years and remained steadfast in one vision (or thought)

only, anarchy prevailed in the world of Pātāla of which he was the king and the Asura-s in it were like shoals of fishes in a muddy pool preyed upon by vultures and other birds of prey.

Then, Viṣṇu, the protector of all worlds and their laws, awoke from his Yoga sleep in the ocean of milk and began to contemplate the well-being of the world in his heart: 'The creation of Brahmā has begun to decline through Prahlaḍa going into the quiescent state, wherein no difference exists. The sinful Dānava-s who are the night-rovers bearing axes having ceased to exist, the Deva-s will be deprived of war in their absence and will become quiescent and attain Mokṣa. With the quiescence of Deva-s, all the Yajña-s done on earth in their honour as well as Tapas, etc. will be barren of results, and therefore fade away. With the cessation of these Yajña-s and other actions, the universe will have to come to a standstill. And then all created objects will cease to exist. Should created objects such as the sun, moon, etc. disappear, then we shall have to give up this form of ours and reach the non-differentiated state of "That". Were all the archaic universes to perish before their allotted time, then no real benefit (or law) will reign in this world. To remedy the defect, we have to resort to the following expedient. May the Asura-s prosper long. In their longevity only lies war.¹ With the opportunity of

¹ This shows that in the opposition of the two principles, Deva-s and Asura-s, in the world lies the preservation of the universe.

war, Deva-s will rise in great numbers. With their advent, Yajña-s and Tapas will be performed. With their performance, the incomparable, mundane existence will arise. May therefore Prahlāda, the lord of Asura-s, live until the end of the Kalpa in this his present body, inasmuch as creation will cease to exist with the extinction of the Asura-s, etc.'

Therefore in order to continue and maintain the divine law of justice of the great Lord (Parameśvara), the Lord Viṣṇu left his serpent couch and approached Prahlāda in Pātāla which was like Satyaloka¹ itself. Seated on his vehicle Garuḍa² having on his right hand Lakṣmī waving the chowries, and saluted by the Muni-s and Deva-s, and accoutred on both sides by the five weapons, the beneficent Viṣṇu caused his Pāñcajanya (conch) to be sounded in order to intimate Prahlāda of his arrival. Owing to the terrible, reverberating sound which pierced the earth, the skies and the quarters, Prahlāda who was merged in the primal seat of 'That', slowly recovered consciousness on this plane. The Caitanyaśakti (consciousness potency) issuing first out of Brahmarandhra³ pervaded, as before, the Nāḍī-s in all the parts of his body and when it reached the nine apertures of the body, Prahlāda became conscious of this (physical) plane. Then his Caitanya (consciousness) began to perceive material

¹ Satyaloka—the seventh, namely Brahmaloaka.

² Garuḍa stands for the Manvantara.

³ Brahmarandhra is the Brahman orifice through which liberation is reached.

objects, only after it shone as a reflection in the glass of the internal Prāṇa. Hence that intelligence of his which manifested itself in objects, comparable to the reflected image in a mirror, assumed the attributes of Manas. As he recovered consciousness little by little, like a lotus unfolding its petals gradually, his beautiful eyes opened. Then the beneficent Prāṇa and Apāna began to percolate throughout his Nāḍī-s (nerves) and organs, producing complete perception of the world. Like a lotus fanned by the mild zephyrs, Prahlāda began to move. In the twinkling of an eye, his mind became gross and his eyes, mind, Prāṇa and body began to glow with life and their respective functions. Then this patient personage appeared in the sight of Viṣṇu of incomparable grace. Seeing, with his full-blown eyes, Viṣṇu before him, his mind became all-full (with contentment).

Thereupon Viṣṇu, with great grace, looked at Prahlāda and blessed him thus: 'Oh immaculate Prahlāda, go and look after your wealth which is praised and coveted by Indra, the lord of Deva-s. Also look after your body. Why do you think of abandoning this your body at such a premature period? So long as you are not haunted by the Saṃkalpa of attraction and repulsion towards objects, what matters it whether your body exists or not? Now rise from Samādhi. May you, O Prahlāda, be in the Jīvan-mukti state. May you, until the end of this Kalpa, administer due justice in this world with this body of yours in the Jīvan-mukti state, but without groaning

under the load of Saṃsāra. Why do you now die (or disappear from this world) in vain, when neither the fires nor the twelve suns burn the universe out of existence (and the Kalpa has not yet closed)? Is not death welcome to those only whose minds being pampered by bondage-giving desire become agitated under the load of Saṃsāra? The lives of those only are blissful who, having mastered egoism and desire, cast their eyes equally upon all, which vision confers infinite bliss. The lives of those only are blissful who, devoid of attachment and hatred, having rendered their minds calm, are witness to all actions, though performing them. He who is attracted towards objects as well as the objects themselves are both bondage-giving; the severance (of the mind) from objects constitutes quiescence. It is only when such quiescence is found that Mokṣa is attained. Now inasmuch as you have reached that state, you should seat yourself on your victorious throne (of the quiescent mind) and reign over your kingdom. You shall presently be invested with the regal diadem in the midst of the reverberating sound of conches and of the auspicious acts and praises of the Deva-s. May you reign till the end of this Kalpa.'

So saying, he ordered auspicious waters to be brought, with which he anointed the king; and then with his hands adorned with conch and discus, he decorated the king's head with a precious, rubied crown in the midst of the eulogies of Deva hosts and then addressed the king thus: 'Mayest thou live and reign

so long as the immovable Mahāmeru, the earth, the sun and the moon endure, and then enter the supreme state.'

With these words, Viṣṇu disappeared in a moment with all the Deva hosts, like the instantaneous disappearance of a false Māyāvic creation.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma questioned him: 'How did the king of the Asura-s, after attaining Jñāna and becoming merged in the true Brahman, return (to the normal state) at the conch-sound of Viṣṇu?' To which Vasiṣṭha replied: In the case of Jīvan-mukta-s divested of the load of Saṃsāra, in whom the pure Vāsanā-s are like a burnt seed, such a seed is never productive of rebirth. But these pure Vāsanā-s, inasmuch as they are pure, all-pervading, subject to manifestation, origin, etc. associated with Sattvaguṇa, and full of the pure Ātmic-Dhyāna (contemplation), always remain in Jīvan-mukta-s like Vāsanā-s during Suṣupti.' Even after the lapse of a thousand years, so long as the body is in existence, the pure Vāsanā-s are latent in the heart and melt away gradually. It is through these pure Vāsanā-s that Jīvan-mukta-s are awakened to an external perception of objects.

5. THE STORY OF GĀDHI

Summary—In this story the nature of Māyā is described through the cognition and avoidance of which Ātman can be known.

It is impossible to describe the grandeur and infinite potency of Māyā which is but a synonym for birth and death. The mastery of the terrible Manās leads to its destruction, but not otherwise. Now listen with an attentive mind to the story I am going to relate to you of the marvellous potency of this powerful Māyā of the universe. So began Vasiṣṭha, addressing himself to Rāma, prince of the solar dynasty.

An excellent Brahmin, by name Gādhi, lived on earth in the country of Kosala. For some reason, he abandoned his relatives for the forest. There, whilst he was performing Tapas for about eight months by standing neck-deep in the waters of a tank, the gracious Viṣṇu deigned to pay a visit to the Brahmin and asked him to state the object of his Tapas.

Thereupon the latter emerged from the water and having reached the bank, fell prostrate at the feet of Viṣṇu and praised him: 'Oh Parabrahman that is inseparable from the lotus heart of all souls, Oh Acyuta (the indestructible), Oh Ananta (the endless), I wish to merge in the immaculate Brahman. Therefore be pleased to enable me to visit (or know) directly the true nature of Māyā which thou hast created and which has wrought the miracle of these universes full of birth and death.' To this request Viṣṇu acceded in the following words: 'Thou shalt see Māyā. Thou shalt, after personally seeing it, be able to free thyself from its yoke.' With these words, Viṣṇu disappeared at once like a Gandharva city. The Brahmin was filled with great bliss having come in contact with the incarnation

of divine grace and spent some days in Tapas in that forest. Then, on his way to bathe in a lotus-filled tank there recurred to his memory the blessed sentences of the Lord Viṣṇu. Dipping his head in the water, he forgot to recite the Vedic Mantra-s and Dhyāna (meditation) which it was his wont to do. And lo! he saw himself dead of a disease in his own house with his relatives gathered together, weeping by the side of his body, while his wife cried bitterly at his feet; and his mother prompted by maternal love embraced her son, as if she was again suckling him, and writhing with pain, drooped senseless like one who had trodden fire. In this state, the weeping relatives began and finished the subsequent post-mortem rites and kindled the funeral pyre for cremation. The body was disposed of on the burning ground by being reduced to ashes. Thus did Gādhī, in the midst of the waters in the tank, see with his mind the illusory actions that were performed by himself through himself. Now Rāma, listen to what subsequently transpired.

Then Vasiṣṭha continued: This life being over, Gādhī found himself reincarnating in the womb of a woman who was like a jet-black picture, and belonged to the degraded caste of dog-eaters. In great travail, she brought him into this world as a male child. After being fondled as a baby, he grew up to manhood with a dark body like charcoal. He had none to equal him in the degraded caste. He married a girl of the same caste and lived with her in great joy. Whilst they

were living harmoniously like life and mind, their union blossomed forth in the birth of children. As time elapsed, dotage and greyness set in upon the husband who constructed a house of leaves at a distance from his place and there dwelt as a Tapasvin. The children too advanced in life and became old. When age had laid its hands upon them all, Kāla (Death) stepped in to relieve all of them except the husband.

Being tired of incessant wailing and solitude, the survivor's mind became confused; he was sick with desire and began to rove through different lands. At last he reached the country called Kīra where justice was duly administered and was passing through one of the streets of that city where the king had died. As he had left no heir, in accordance with immemorial custom regarding the choice of a king, the people decked the state elephant with gold and precious gems, and let it loose to go its way and select a king. The tusker in search of a person to rule the kingdom found opposite to it this Nīca, akin to it in colour, and raised him upon its temples with its long trunk, looking like Udayagiri (hills) at the dawn of the sun, amidst the din of many musical instruments and exclamations from the eight quarters: 'Victory be to thee, Victory be to thee.' Thereupon the fair ladies of the palace lavished their skill in adorning their newly-made king. The old courtiers and the commander-in-chief began to obey his behests. Gavala was the name assumed by the king, befitting his position as the wise and just protector of the earth. He reigned over his land

seated on the splendid jewelled throne, loved by all the court ladies who shone with scarlet lips.

After eight years had elapsed, the king one day doffed all his ornaments and was perambulating alone on foot the street beside his palace with all the appearance of a true Nica, when he saw before him a group of outcastes of the caste of dog-eaters with dark complexion, travelling along and playing upon their stringed *Viṇā* (musical instrument). The oldest of the throng, who had blood-shot eyes and black colour, having observed the present king of Kīra and recognized him, approached him with true love and addressed him with the old familiar name: 'Oh Katañja, where art thou, my old relative? In what place dost thou now dwell? It is only through good Karman that I have been able to see thee here.' So saying, he clearly traced back his whole genealogy and revealed other particulars. At this, the king slighted his words, since his low status was brought to publicity, and having loudly repulsed him, he at once withdrew into his palace.

Meanwhile the ladies of the harem observed from the balcony all that passed between the king and the low-caste men; quite surprised, they apprised the minister, who was then staying in the palace, of the occurrences: 'This lord of earth, our king, belongs to the lowest class of Caṇḍāla-s. How shall we act now?' Unable to find any way out of the situation, they were stunned, perplexed and depressed. Whereas the king, not daunted by all this, seated himself on the throne as before, as if nothing had transpired. But

the ladies, courtiers and others who had before approached him, stood at a distance from him, as if he were a carcase unfit to be touched by the hand. The sad plight of the king who was alone, even in the midst of innumerable subjects, can only be likened to a forlorn traveller left in a foreign country without knowledge, wealth or any other means. Then the subjects held a solemn conclave in which they came to the following conclusion: 'We have contaminated ourselves with grave sins through association with this Nīca, our king. No amount of penance will expiate this sin of ours. Therefore we shall purify ourselves by entering into fire.' With this resolution, all the subjects from the eldest down to babies flocked together and fell into a large fire reared for the occasion, like swarms of flies buzzing on a Campaka flower. Then the king became afflicted in heart, but with a collected mind, soliloquized thus:

'Through contact with me an outcaste, all my countrymen became degraded and therefore perished in the flames. It is quite useless for me to outlive them. I shall follow the same course as they.' With this purpose, he allowed himself to be devoured by the flames.

While the body of Katarīja was being burnt like a tender leaf exposed to flames, the body of Gādhi which had taken a plunge into the waters of the tank began to palpitate and quiver. In four Ghaṭikā-s,¹ Gādhi's mind became cleared of the obscurations of Māyā and began to ruminate upon who he was and

¹ A measure of time equal to 24 minutes.

what he saw and did in that state. Then he rose up from the water to the bank of the tank; and after having meditated upon the manner in which all Jīva-s in this world run about agitated in mind, like angry tigers chafing in the forest, he was (temporarily) relieved at heart (in spite of his lingering doubts).

With these thoughts in mind, he passed some days in his hermitage, when there came to the spot a guest who was regaled with honey and fruit. At the time of Saṃdhyā when the sun set, they both performed their daily Karman-s and returned to their respective seats of rest, where they were engaged with Ātma-jñāna stories. At this time, Muni Gādhi inquired of the stranger the cause of the extreme emaciation of his body.

The guest replied: 'At the request of my beloved relatives, I spent a month in the famous and wealthy country of Kīra situated on the north of this earth. Whilst I was recouping my health there, I chanced to come in contact with a person who related the following anecdote. A king ruled over that country without the occurrence of any conflict for about eight years, after which the true status of the king, who belonged to the lowest class of Nīca-s, the dog-eaters, was brought to light. With that discovery, all the Brahmins and others entered into fire and the king followed suit. Hearing of this horrid fate of the Brahmins, I quit the country and took a pilgrimage to Prayāga (Allahabad) in order to wash off all my sins in those waters with seething waves. There, in

accordance with Vedic rites, I underwent penances and Cāndrāyaṇa Vrata¹ and became emaciated.'

At these words of the guest, Muni Gādhi was surprised and internally convinced that it was his own history that was related by the stranger. To verify for himself the truth of the events of his previous Nica life, he travelled to the Hūṇa-maṇḍala² where he saw his birthplace and the other places he dwelt in. All being as he had previously seen in his Samādhi, he shook his head in surprise and after surveying the diverse creations of Brahmā, he proceeded still further to the Kira country where he saw without missing anything, his former palace and other familiar sights, and heard the events of his life related by the people there. Is this the Māyā with which Viṣṇu acquainted me? Through the wonderful seed of my intelligence, I have been able to observe all these.

With these thoughts in mind, he soon reached the slopes of a great hill and became an incomparable Tapasvin. Tapas was performed by him such as to gladden Viṣṇu, with a handful of water as food. After the lapse of a year spent in such Tapas, Viṣṇu appeared before him in his hermitage in the form of a dark blue cloud and addressed him: 'Thou hast seen the glory of Māyā in its true colours. What more dost thou want? Why

¹ Cāndrāyaṇa Vrata—This is an observance in which beginning with fifteen morsels of food on a full moon day, a person reduces them one by one till he reaches the new moon day when he increases it one by one daily.

² Lit. the country of Hūṇa-s or the lower caste men.

dost thou perform this true Tapas on the hill-side here?'

The Muni exulted with joy, like the Cātaka bird at the sight of dark clouds in the sky, and poured forth praises, prostrations, and salutations to Viṣṇu. Then looking at Viṣṇu of graceful vision, he questioned Him: 'I have known vividly the nature of Māyā, the result of Karman, which thou wert pleased to show me. But I am yet ignorant of Māyā in its latent, innate state. How came this delusion to manifest itself as real?'

Viṣṇu replied: 'Oh Brahmin, this earth and other things of the universe have for their substratum the mind and do not exist at any time apart from the mind. Almost all persons in this world, in this universe of dreams, delusion and egoism, look upon it as real and enjoy it. It is only in Citta (the fitting mind) that the universe rests. Why shouldst thou be surprised if this mind of thine, which contains (potentially) in itself all the universe, should bring into objectivity thy life as a Nīca (which is but an insignificant part of the whole)? The excessive one-pointedness (*ekāgratā*) or ideation of thy mind reflected itself in the life of a Nīca, which reflection became then known. This reflection was caught by the guest who came subsequently and saw as real all these delusions. Like the analogy of a crow and palmyra fruits,¹ the ideation of the Nīca's life

¹ Just as the cause of the fall of ripe palmyra fruits is wrongly attributed to a crow which perches upon the tree at the time of

reflected itself in the minds of all who lived in Hūṇa-maṇḍala and Kīra-maṇḍala.¹ Thus these two kinds of ideation became endowed with increased Reality in the minds of all creatures. Thus diverse persons view the one dream (of the universe) in various ways. With one sport, many boys divert themselves.

‘The Nīca was thus born in Hūṇa-maṇḍala, the habitation prepared for him by the mind. Likewise with the death of his relatives, he reached a foreign country. There he reigned over the country of Kīra with his victorious white parasol overshadowing his subjects and there allowed himself to be devoured by flames. It was only the ideation of your supreme mind thinking about the Nīca’s life that brought about the reflection which afterwards assumed a reality. The ignorant who are impressed with the idea of the differentiations of “He, thou, I, this, that, mine, etc.” will ever be sunk in the mire of pain; but those who have cognized earth and the other things of the universe as no other than “I” will never grieve. With a mind distinct from and having no longing towards the things of this earth, the firm intelligence will never cling to desire. Knowers of Tattva-jñāna never render themselves liable to the delusions of Ajñāna. As thou hast not cognized Jñāna fully, thou hast not rid thyself of thy mental delusions and abandoned them as

their fall, so the universe is thought to be real though it is merely the creation of the mind.

¹ Literally, the country of Kīra or Kashmir.

degrading. Therefore it is that thou hast completely forgotten thyself in a moment through thy delusions. In this wheel of the grand Moha (delusion), Manas is the axle. If through discrimination, thy mind be destroyed, then Māyā will not afflict thee. Now rise up and retire into the caves of this hill and perform Tapas for ten years. Then will the eternal and true Jñāna dawn in thee fully.'

With these words, (the above-mentioned) manifested form of Viṣṇu disappeared at the spot where it appeared. Thereupon the Muni Gādhi, freed of delusion, became free of attachments and underwent Tapas. After the course of ten years, he lived replete with true Jñāna. Then having attained the incomparable state of Sat, devoid of fear, pain, and longing for objects, he shone in his real, quiescent state as a Jīvan-mukta, ever of the nature of bliss, with a mind as full as the full moon.

6. THE STORY OF UDDĀLAKA

Summary—Having shown in the previous story that if Brahman, which enables one to understand Māyā which is of the nature of mind, be known, then all ideas of the universe vanish, the author narrates the present story to illustrate that this absolute bliss arises through Sāmādhi consequent upon Ātmic inquiry.

Thus you will find that Māyā pervades everywhere, is hard to be mastered, and generating different degrees of illusion, high and low, has as its substratum, Parabrahman. Therefore I have to declare to you that whoever is not ever in the Brahmic Reality will be drowned by the Guṇa-s¹ of Māyā in pain which seethes like the billows of an ocean.

I solemnly affirm that the fell disease can be removed only through the divine panacea of mind-mastery and not through any other means. Oh Rāma, the wise duly perform all actions arising out of the condition of their caste and order of life, every moment of their lives during their present period, but never concern themselves with actions, past or future. If every moment of your life you try to abandon Saṃkalpa-s, desires and past actions, then this itself is called the absorption of the mind. That Jñāna which is associated with the destruction of the mind is the Jñāna of the partless Pratyagātman. Such Jñāna is without mental modifications and being. It is without the Vikalpa of the mind.

Total freedom from the bondage of Manas leads to the unveiled cognition of truth, the auspicious (Śiva), the Brahmic state, the omniscient, all-full bliss, which is stainless. May you, my child, after destroying Ajñāna, engage your mind in the wise Ātma-jñāna books, with true exultation of heart and certitude of conviction, and live in bliss, without any care or worry,

¹ The three Guṇa-s of Māyā being Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

as the Absolute Consciousness itself, though ever engaged in actions such as talking, renouncing, accepting, opening or shutting the eyelids, etc. May you live in your Ātmic Reality as Brahman itself, severing mentally all your connection with visible things, purging your mind of all impurities and destroying the weeds of bondage-giving desire. May you live as Brahman itself, the quintessence of all Jñāna, without being overcome by attachment or hatred, producing fluctuations of mind, or by the poisonous pest of desire for objects, pleasurable or otherwise. May you, Oh Rāma, live immutably as the absolute Sat and Cit by attaining quiescence through meditation on the non-dual Parabrahman alone, without the countless conceptions of 'I', 'he', 'it' and other diversities. May you cognize directly that non-dual state of Ātma-Jñāna like an adamant pillar denuded of all conceptions of duality. The moment you rest in that pure and all-full Jñāna without any conception of separate existence, that moment will all conceptions of duality, the root of all delusions of rebirth, be effaced from your mind. If you experience that real state, the source of bliss, then even rare ambrosia will be to you like fatal poison. If you allow your (lower) mind to get enmeshed (in earthly things), then the never-fading true Jñāna will recede to a great distance. Will the full moon appear visibly when dark clouds intervene between it and our eyes? So long as there is the centering of affection on this body, which is non-Ātman, and the mistaken identification of it with Ātman, so long will the mind grow

grosser and grosser in its association with the Saṃsāra of wife, children, etc. The mind waxes strong through its egoistic sports (or actions) and the dualities of conception arising through Ahaṃkāra. Oh my son Rāghava, in every birth, the mind grows because the mental disease (of objects) becomes more and more prevalent in it, and consequently there is tenacious effort directed towards the gain or loss of objects in the world. Undoubtedly, when women, wealth, gems and other objects are longed for and acquired, such gain, or the greed arising out of the gain, produces for the time being pleasure, and seems to be productive of good. But such good tends only to glut the mind. Having quaffed the milk of vicious desires, this serpent-mind will be invigorated and crawl everywhere, breathing the atmosphere of long-standing enjoyments. Now Rāma, attend to what I say. Like Muni Uddālaka of old, having vanquished all the five Bhūta-s (elements), thou shalt set about inquiring through thy pain-free mind.

At which, Śrī Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha: 'How did Muni Uddālaka manage to destroy the five Bhūta-s (elements) and to meditate within himself?'

Vasiṣṭha replied: Through Ātmic inquiry, Oh graceful Rāma, did Muni Uddālaka conquer the five Bhūta-s and reach Brahman, the non-dual state. I shall now proceed to relate his story. This Muni lived on the slopes of the Gandhamādana hills, thick with forests of flower-bearing trees, and fragrant with camphor. He was a pure Muni of great intelligence

and inquiring spirit. Yet he had not reached that quiescent Plenum in which all pain is destroyed, though he had purged his mind of all impurities. With the following of a virtuous course, the due performance of Niṣkāma Tapas (Tapas without the longing for fruit), a right understanding of the significance of the spiritual books and a proper observance of Yama¹ and Niyama, an unclouded discrimination illumined Uddālaka's mind and he began to meditate thus:

‘What is that state which is a safe refuge without pain? What is that imperishable state without the pangs of rebirth? Is it not this which should above all be sought after? When shall I be able to secure and rest in that non-dual, immaculate Brahmic state without any Saṃkalpa of the mind, like clouds on top of the Mahāmeru? When shall I be able to rid my mind of the plethora of material enjoyments, of which the mind, after having exhausted one, craves for another in an agitated state? When shall I be able to cross, on the vessel of my intelligence, this ocean of desire with the seething billows of the mind with its egoism? I shall therefore exult in the state of the Light within my heart, without action or inaction, attraction or repulsion towards objects. I shall therefore remain in Nirvikalpa Samādhi, as immovable as a rock in the caves of a mountain, having merged in Ātman without any Saṃkalpa-s. When shall I, through my

¹ Yama and Niyama, or forbearance and religious observance, are the first two parts of Yoga.

one-pointed (and deeply concentrated) Dhyāna (meditation), become oblivious of external things, allowing even a bevy of birds to build their nest in my hair and inhabiting it?’

Thus did Uddālaka contemplate in his mind, and becoming ecstatic within, resolve upon the mastery of Brahma-dhyāna. But his monkey of a mind soon perched upon one branch or another of sensual objects; and he was not able to master Samādhi which leads one into the ecstatic realm of Reality. He roamed in forests without a settled mind; at another time, being freed from all external vision, his mischievous mind went into Samādhi with great difficulty. Thus he was passing his days in a whirl, till he reached a cave in which no creature existed and which was hard to reach like the state of Mokṣa. Into such a cave did the Muni enter alone; and having spread a deer-skin on the sylvan bower leaves and having, through his discriminative mind, decreased the actions of his mind, he began to meditate like the Buddha. With his face turned towards the north, he seated himself in the Padma posture and saluted Brahman; and having concentrated his mind, whirling through Vāsanā-s, he began to reflect thus, in order to develop Nirvikalpa Samādhi:

‘Oh my ignorant mind, of what avail are your illusory lives? Will the wise ever involve themselves in actions generating pain? Those who, not caring for the inexhaustible nectar of quiescence, long for material objects, resemble persons who give up the divine

garden of Kalpa trees breathing forth fine fragrance in favour of a poisonous and hot desert. Whether Brahmaloka or Pātāla-loka is reached by one, he will never be able to attain Nirvāṇic bliss without the supreme nectar of quiescence. All these vain actions which are of the nature of the mind within are productive of intense pain and are never pleasurable. Oh ignorant and idiotic mind of mine, why dost thou reel in vain ceaselessly? Why hast thou subjected thyself to pleasure and pain? Why art thou not able to fix thyself in the nectar-like state of quiescence and equilibrium? Oh my ever-expanding, foolish mind, do not die like the deer¹ (Kuraṅga) by associating thyself with sound, the property of the organ of hearing. Neither shouldst thou subject thyself to pain by running after the sensation of touch arising from the skin, like a male elephant in amorous quest after its consort. Nor shouldst thou, Oh mind, associating thyself with form, the property of the eye, singe thyself to death, like a moth in the light of a lamp. Nor shouldst thou, Oh mind, associating thyself with taste, the property of the tongue, perish like a fish caught by a bait. Nor shouldst thou, Oh mind, be bound by odour, like bees in quest of honey, by associating thyself with breath proceeding from the lotus-like heart. Hence the deer, elephant, moth, fishes and bees (which here stand for the mind in the comparisons above) each dies

¹ Kuraṅga is also stated to be a species of bird attracted by and perishing through sound.

through sound, touch, form, taste and odour respectively. But if thou art afflicted with all the five combined together, what true bliss is there for thee? The Vāsanā-s are the net woven to bind thee. Oh thou tarnished mind, if these Vāsanā-s are mastered, then thou hast scored a tremendous victory. For what do I address thee thus? In those wise persons in whom Ātma-jñāna inquiry is fully developed, the (lower) mind does not exist. How is it possible for the all-pervading, eternal Jñāna, subtle as it is, to exist in the mind? Can an elephant enter a Bilva fruit? Notwithstanding the analysis and examination in diverse ways of this body from top to toe, "I" does not pertain to this body. The ideation of "I" pervades everywhere. I shall look upon this universe as the supreme Jñāna itself, pervading all the quarters, invisible, without fluctuation and self-shining. In that Jñāna, I do not find names or forms, duality or non-duality, smallness or greatness or any other characteristics. As I am myself the true Jñāna, thou alone, Oh mind of mine that hast generated all differences in this world, art the cause of pain. I shall promptly destroy thee through the Jñāna developed by discrimination. This thou shalt presently witness. How can "I" be the flesh, blood, bones, Prāṇa composed of Vāyu or any other thing pertaining to this body? In this body, flesh, blood, bones and Karmendriya-s (organs of action), Jñānendriya-s (organs of sense), etc. are different and separate. Being so, how can "I" be applied to them? How can "I" be applied to the eyes, skin, fat, ears

nose or the moist tongue? The "I" is all-pervading. Not even in the slightest degree can "I" exist in objects? This is the true vision (of knowledge). There is no other path. Oh ignorant and artful mind of mine, thou hast beguiled and intimidated me in all manner of ways—me who am the pure Jñāna itself—like wild dogs frightening a calf. I have, through divine law, now discovered that villain of Ajñāna who purloined out of my hands the Ātmic jewel. Never hereafter shall I have anything to do with him.

‘The five organs, though free from Vāsanā-s, do yet incline towards their respective external objects. The Vāsanā-s are not the cause of the organs. Therefore, Oh ignorant five organs, if, after purging the impurities within, you should perform actions, no pain of any sort will make its habitation within you. Like a silkworm which, having spun a web out of its mouth, dies in its meshes, thou, Oh child of the sense-organs that play in visible things, wilt share the same fate. Oh thou mind, the seat of all Indriya-s (sense-organs), mayest thou cognize the Reality of Jñāna with the Indriya-s perfectly under thy control. Mayest thou permanently attain Jñāna of non-dual Nirvāṇic bliss without any attractions (towards objects). Having given up all Vāsanā-s of "I" which is attended by the poisonous disease of objects, and having overcome rebirth by means of the Mantra of non-desire, mayest thou, Oh mind, become of the nature of the Lord and reach that state from whence there is no return. I shall find joy in this Jñāna state, having

disentangled myself from the forest of "I", wherein Saṃkalpa-s are the trees and desires, the plants. Living according to my free will and pleasure, I have now reached the Brahmic state. I am alone. I am a victor. I have become of the nature of Mokṣa, I am actionless and differenceless. Spiritual illumination, great intelligence, Tāttvic knowledge, Jñāna, the inseparable Satya, noble bliss, quiescence, true exultation in the performance of good Karman, all-fullness, nobility, good qualities, an unveiled vision, a bountiful heart, undiminished lustre, the qualities leading to oneness, fearlessness, homogeneity—these are like beautiful damsels that, though associating with my mind, which has attained Ātmic Reality, do not agitate it.'

Then he began to meditate powerfully through his all-pervading mind now brought into subjection without any modification; seated in Padmāsana, with his eyes partially opened like a half-blown lotus, this supreme personage uttered Praṇava (Om) without any difficulty and with its appropriate high-sounding intonation. Then Muni Uddālaka began to cognize Brahman. But when he intoned the first part or *akāra* of Praṇava which is of three and a half *mātrā*-s and raises one by itself, without any aid, to the transcendental Jñāna that is all-pervading and pure, all the noble Prāṇavāyu-s shone with effulgence in his body, producing sound in it. Then did the process of *recaka* (expiration) take place in the whole body, exhaling the Prāṇavāyu without. Like Muni Agastya who sipped in one sip the whole ocean and rendered it void of water, his body was

rendered void of Prāṇavāyu which lifted itself up to the regions of Brahmākāśa of partless Jñāna essence. The great Agni of the heart (or Jñānāgni) pervaded the body and burnt it up (within). This is the first stage of Praṇava. This stage of *recaka* shines or (arises) not through Haṭhayoga. For does not Haṭhayoga generate dire pain? Then in the equilibrated stage of the second, namely *ukāra* of the noble Praṇava, the immovable *kumbhaka* (cessation of breath) was induced in the Prāṇavāyu-s which pervaded the body. The agitationless Prāṇavāyu-s were then full both externally and internally, high and low, and in the quarters and the Ākāśa, like bellows filled with air. In an instant, the Agni which burnt the body in the previous stage was now extinguished, like a flashing lightning. The body became white like ashes, thereby revealing within it bones, muscles and other things in order. The network of bones appeared in a regular gradation, as if sleeping in a bed of camphor. With Vāyu, these white ashes were raised up in the air and in a moment permeated the whole Ākāśa. They collected themselves in one place like wintry clouds. Thus was the second stage of Praṇava attained, where he remained as long as he wished and required. This stage was not developed through Haṭhayoga which generates endless pain. Then in the third quiescent stage of Praṇava, namely *makāra*, the Prāṇavāyu-s reached the stage called *pūraka* (inspiration) on account of their *pūrāṇa* (fullness). In that painless stage, all the Prāṇa-s entered the nectar of intelligence. All the Prāṇavāyu-s which were cool, as

if drenched in snow, became the Maṇḍala (sphere) of the moon in the midst of the Ākāśa, like evaporated steam in the atmosphere transmuted into cool clouds. Then the Prāṇa-s, laden with nectarean showers, descended down from the Ākāśa, like the divine Gaṅgā flowing from the head of Śiva, and soaked the bodily ashes lying below. The strong, resplendent body of Muni Uddālaka glowed like the form of Viṣṇu with the four arms, having the lustre of the moon. The Prāṇa-s saturated with nectar, permeated the whole body, and saluting Kuṇḍalinī Śakti (in the navel), circumambulated it.

Thus did the Muni Uddālaka, seated in the Padma posture, render his body proof against destruction, and then firmly control his mind which previously whirled like an intoxicated bee. Remaining silent, he calculated the speed of the soft Prāṇa-s and Apāna-s and gradually controlled them. With great difficulty, he separated the Indriya-s (sense-organs) from the objects to which they clung. He severed himself completely from external objects. With a firm mind, free from all attractions, he rendered non-existent all objects that arose in his mind, through clear vision. In order to prevent the exit of Prāṇavāyu, he closed first the primal avenue and thereby all the nine avenues of the body, just as a house, when its front gate is closed, prevents ingress into the minor gates within. Then he pinioned his mind in the supreme heart Ākāśa in a state simulating death.

Having thus been captured and controlled like a rutting elephant in a mountain pitfall, his mind

became clear as a placid sky and was devoid of Vikalpa-s which are but reflections (of the Truth). Like a champion killing with his sword the foes who rise against him again and again, he destroyed, as they arose, all thoughts of objects. With the extinction of Vikalpa-s, he destroyed with his discrimination that (mental) darkness which intervened between himself and the spiritual Sun in his heart. Then the Muni saw before him a radiant light. In that stage, the mind of the Muni began to whirl and became dazed as in the dead of night. This dizziness being overcome, void Ākāśa was known by him, and then came Moha (delusion). Even this Moha was dispelled from his mind by this Muni of blissful vision, like darkness scattered at the approach of the sun in this world.

Passing thus through the stages of darkness, light, sleep and Moha, the Muni at last reached the stage of Nirvikalpa Samādhi when his mind enjoyed quiescence. With freedom from pain, he attained the real Jñāna shining everywhere in all forms, like water which when dammed up fills all the previously unfilled spots. Through long practice and cognition of true Jñāna, his mind became of the nature of It, like an ornament which is of the nature of gold. Being deprived of its attribute of hardness, it became Cit (Consciousness) itself, like a pot amidst clay. Being divested of all visions of objects, it was of the nature of Consciousness proper, like a calm ocean without waves. The Muni, freed from attractions towards objects, became of

the nature of Prāṇākāśa pervading everywhere the substratum of the mundane egg. He was submerged, as in an ocean of nectar, in the great bliss where the seer alone exists without objects of sight. He reached that Jñāna-state which is above all, and in which nothing but truth exists, and became the ocean of eternal Jñāna and the all-pervading Absolute Consciousness. The swan (Haṃsa) of intelligence of this Brahmin began to sport in the endless pool of spiritual bliss. Thus did the Muni enjoy his Ātman, like a full moon in an autumnal sky or a lamp shining in a still atmosphere or the ocean without waves or a cloud pregnant (or laden) with unshed water.

Perceiving the Muni in the Brahmic state, Siddha-s, Deva-s, and others began to encircle him. Deva ladies flocked to him in great numbers. Devendra offered to the Muni his Devaloka which the latter disdained to accept along with the other objects offered him. The Muni was too deeply aware to succumb to the charms and amours of the celestial ladies, he being like an innocent lad to them. So being without the idea of sensual enjoyment, he shone resplendently in the home of bliss, like the sun in Uttarāyaṇa (northerly course) for a period of six months. Thus did the Muni rest in the Jīvan-mukti state, wherein the supreme Trinity, Deva-s, Siddha-s and others abide—which state is above all, ever full and replete with bliss. This state can be stated to be both full of bliss and without it. Whether the wise rest in that Brahmic state for one moment or a hundred years, they never afterwards

long for the sight of objects which are the generators of rebirth. After six months, the Muni awoke from his Samādhi in which he discarded all longing for the pleasures of Svargaloka. Awakening, he noticed the Siddha hosts before him, who tempted him thus: 'See this vehicle of ours. It will take thee up to Devaloka. Mount it gladly. In all the other worlds, there is no bliss to vie with the joy of Svargaloka. Thou wilt be able to enjoy, till a Kalpa's end, all its fruits. Oh Lord, all thy Tapas is only for the attainment of Svargic bliss.'

He took them to be great personages and paid them due respect; but having an unwavering mind that neither longed for nor hated the Svarga pleasures, he asked the Deva-s to depart and turned to the performance of his own actions. Then the Siddha-s, finding it useless to wait any longer in anticipation of Uddālaka's mind returning to their Svargic pleasures, vanished from the scene. The Muni enjoyed Nirvāṇic bliss as long as he willed and amidst the company of the true devotees of the Lord. He would spend in one sitting, days, months, and even years in deep Samādhi and then wake up. From that time onward, he was ever engaged in Nirvikalpa Samādhi, when his mind reached the non-dual state. He was full everywhere, like the sun's rays pervading the whole world. Through the long, unintermittent practice of merging in the Cit-Sāmānya (or the one Universal Consciousness), he reached the Sattā-sāmānya (or the Universal Beness). Uddālaka who was thus unlike the sun in

the month of Caitra (April-May) appearing and disappearing in this world, became of quiescent mind through the attainment of the Jīvan-mukti state.

Here Śrī Rāma interrupted Vasiṣṭha with the question: 'What is Sattā-sāmānya?' To which Vasiṣṭha replied:

When one's mind, being denuded of all false thoughts, becomes of the nature of the all-pervading Cit-sāmānya, and when all thoughts decrease gradually, then this Cit-sāmānya is itself Sattā-sāmānya. When all visible things vanish from one's mind as unreal as the horns of a hare, and when Vṛtti-jñāna (the actions of the lower mind) is merged into Ātmic Consciousness, then this Consciousness is itself Sattā-sāmānya. When all external and internal objects as well as diverse things and bodies are annihilated (from the mind) and when the mind exists as Consciousness itself, then this Cit-sāmānya is Sattā-sāmānya. Without any thought of visible things, though they appear before him, if one dies (or withdraws himself) into Ātman, like the body of a tortoise withdrawn into its shell, then such an ego is Sattā-sāmānya. That supreme vision, in which the transcendental Jīvan-mukta-s and Videha-mukta-s are, is the Sattā-sāmānya. It is also termed the state of Turyātīta.¹ This divine vision arises in those who have developed Samādhi through knowledge and discrimination, or arises voluntarily in persons through the memory of previous workings,

¹ Turyātīta—the state beyond the fourth.

but not in the case of the ignorant. Such a divine vision is inseparable from Jivan-mukta-s, like the wind and atmosphere or the earth and odour. It is this divine vision that the Trimūrti and other Deva-s attained as well as Ṛṣi-s, Nārada, myself and others. It is this Sattā-sāmānya, the abode of the world, in which Uddālaka lived as long as he liked, free from multifarious states.

After a long period, the Muni resolved upon becoming a Videha-mukta and abandoning his body. In the beautiful caves of the Gandhamādana hills, he seated himself again in the Padma posture. With his eyelids half open, he blocked the front gate of the body and thereby all its nine internal avenues. Then he reduced through his mind, organs and objects into one and meditated upon his all-full Jñāna as still as an ocean without waves, having previously controlled the speed of Prāṇavāyu, with his body and neck erect, and thrust the tip of his tongue below the base of the uvula.¹ His face was irradiated with lustre, his eyes and mind diverted from all objects, external and internal, high and low, as well as the void Ākāśa. The speed of Prāṇavāyu being arrested with his two rows of teeth closely set, one over another, his body was impregnated with Jñāna; and quite exhilarated with joy, with his hair standing on end, he became through practice the Cit-sāmānya itself, and through it, Brahmic bliss reigned in his mind. After

¹ This is called the Khecarī Mudrā.

quaffing fully the ocean of Brahmic bliss, he quit the Āt-sāmānya state for the Sattā-sāmānya state which, being itself infinite, is the substratum of all. In this state he was completely quiescent and free from the pain of the mind. Through this wonderful bliss, far transcending all measurable bliss, he bloomed like a fresh lotus. Having reached this supreme state, his hair ceased to stand on end, his mind gradually melted away, all delusions of birth wore away little by little and he became pure Sattva itself. He was like a statue or the full moon in a cloudless sky, and merged for some time in his Reality and at last became one with the Brahmic Light.

7. THE STORY OF SURAGHU

Summary—This story is intended to prove that the results of quiescence of mind, etc. which are developed through Samādhi as in the previous story can also be obtained through Ātma-vicāra (Ātmic inquiry).

Mayest thou, Oh Rāma, attain quiescence in the endless, all-full state by cognizing through thy mind the knower! Oh lotus-eyed Rāma, till thou attainest that state through mastery over visible objects thou shalt ever be engaged in inquiry through thy mind into that boundless Tattva-jñāna which is inculcated by thy virtuous Guru and the Jñāna-śāstra-s. The

supreme state can be attained through Vairāgya (indifference to sensual objects), the true signification of Jñāna-books, one's own intelligence, the initiation by a Guru and the performance of Yama and Niyama; or it can be attained through one's intelligence alone. Even if one were devoid of other means, he will obtain Mokṣa, provided he receives initiation from a Guru and has a subtle and spotless intelligence.

At these words of Muni Vasiṣṭha, Rāma interposed: 'Of the personages named by you, one class frees itself from all pain and attains the non-dual Jñāna by going into Samādhi, even while engaged in the performance of worldly actions. Another disengages itself altogether from all worldly actions and retires into Samādhi. Which of these two is the superior? Please enlighten me on this point.'

Vasiṣṭha continued: In Samādhi there exists that calmness which arises in the hearts of wise persons who have cognized this world of three Guṇa-s to be non-Ātman. Some remain in Svarūpa-samādhi¹ without concerning themselves with worldly actions and without any longing for objects. Others go into Samādhi in the midst of the performance of worldly actions. Provided the mind remains calm, there is no difference between them. Such calmness of the mind will generate all the incalculable fruits of a great Tapas. The mind of one who is in this state is never affected by pain, though engaged in actions.

¹ Svarūpa-samādhi—meditation on the Ātmic Reality.

Though seated as in Samādhi, if the mind is agitated it is no Samādhi at all. But if the mind is free of Vāsanā-s, even if the body is agitated as in a dance, then such a state might be termed Samādhi. The difference between Jñānin-s who retire into a forest and those who are in the midst of worldly actions is nothing. Both are equal and will undoubtedly reach Mokṣa.

With the extinction of Vāsanā-s, all actions performed are as if not done, like the mind of a person who, when he is deeply engaged within, does not hear the sounds uttered by bystanders. But if the gross mind, though it has ceased to perform actions, has yet Vāsanā-s which cling to it, then it performs actions in Svapna (the dreaming state) when the whole body is paralysed, like persons falling down headlong from a precipice. Know that the state of the mind, which performing all actions is yet free from them, is termed the blissful Samādhi, the non-fluctuating Nirvāṇa and the transcendent bliss. The fluctuation of the mind and its steadiness are the inseparable causes of the two kinds of vision, non-Dhyāna and Dhyāna (non-meditation and meditation). Therefore you should destroy all the attributes of the mind. It is stated that Dhyāna is the firm mind itself, devoid of Vāsanā-s which are of the nature of Cintana (thoughts). Quiescence and Kaivālya are (or pertain to) this mind only. A mind which never has worries will reach the Nirvāṇic state devoid of actions through the extinction of Vāsanā-s. The Vāsanā-s generate never-ending pain arising from

mental actions. Therefore these should be made to wear away.

After destroying all conceptions of 'I' in the hosts of visible objects through the mind, it matters not where you live, whether in a house or in the hills or any other place. The abode of those householders who are of quiescent mind and not tainted with Ahaṁkāra can well be termed a forest. Persons who stroll through a market without any longing for the things therein are like those who never go there. Similarly to persons full of spiritual beatitude, cities and woods are without difference. Though successively performing the functions of sleeping, waking, reading, going, etc. those who consider as a forest their permanent abode, city and country because of their spiritual introvision, are the most intelligent ones. Through this introvision, all will become to them Jñānākāśa itself. Oh thou, equal unto Prāṇa itself, if thy mind becomes calm and thy heart full, then the universe too will be calm.

Should the mind be agitated with the illusions of the world, then the universe too will appear as if burnt by a forest fire. In all Jīva-s, whatever arises internally will manifest itself externally. The ambrosial Svargaloka, earth, Vāyu, Ākāśa, mountains, rivers, quarters and other objects surrounding us are only external manifestations of the Antaḥkaraṇa (the lower mind) with its parts. He only will enjoy Samādhi who takes delight in Ātma-jñāna, performs actions on account of the Indriya-s only and is unaffected by pleasure or pain. He only is the seer (knower) of

all who regards all lives as his own and who, spurning wealth, sees the world in its real state and not through fear.

Whether death visits them now or at the end of a Kalpa, such wise persons are never troubled in their minds. Having reached the quiescent state of the All and the divine vision, such persons are predicated by the Veda-s with the characteristics of non-duality, pure bliss, light and the non-existence of the universe, without destruction, beginning or end. All the characteristics mentioned before are for the purpose of cognizing Jñāna. Of what use are well-expressed words (in the conception of Parabrahman)? Therefore all names might be simplified into the one Praṇava (Om) to describe Brahman.

Oh beneficent Rāma, to illustrate this kind of experience, I shall relate to thee a story of old. The history of Suraghu who belonged to the low class of Kirāṭa-s¹ and lived on the slope of a hill is indeed marvellous. A class of hunters named Hemajaṭa lived in the Kailāsa hills on the summit of the Himālaya-s and were adepts in archery. Over them reigned the hero of the present story, an undaunted warrior. While he was administering justice in his kingdom with strict impartiality, protecting the virtuous and chastising the vicious, the following ideas passed through his mind: 'If through my regal powers, I afflict my people, is not their pain mine? But if I fail to mete out to

¹ A class of people who live by the chase.

them punishments according to the Dharma-śāstra-s, then all my subjects will die in vain without a protector. Ruling over a kingdom is indeed a difficult task.' With these thoughts surging in his mind, he was afflicted at heart. At this juncture, Muni Māṇḍavya appeared. Thereupon Suraghu, having paid him due respects and eulogized him, addressed him thus: 'Oh virtuous Muni, with thy advent my heart has been filled with complete happiness. I am glad to see that I have found a place in a corner of the heart of good men like thyself. As thou, Oh lord, the cognizer of all Dharma-s hast long been free from all despondency of heart, I hope thou wilt clear my doubts, who am involved in manifold Karma-s. There is nothing in this world which so torments the mind of an individual as doubt. My mind grows dizzy with the pain or pleasure my subjects undergo in this spacious land of mine through my favour or disfavour, like an elephant before a lion. Please bless me in such a manner that equality of vision over all may set in upon my mind, like the sun shining everywhere.'

To which Muni Māṇḍavya replied: 'The stains of the mind will be washed away by Ātmic inquiry, like fog disappearing before the rays of the sun. If you will unceasingly engage yourself in reflecting over the questions, "Who am I? Whence came the universe? How came birth and death?", you will be able to gain the higher state. If you make Ātmic inquiry, then your mind will be made subservient to your will and will become devoid of pain. Before a calm mind, free

from ups and downs, all worldly actions appear trivial, as the footprints of a cow do to a huge elephant. Though trivial in the eyes of the wise, these actions are insurmountable obstacles (in the view of others). For is not the water enclosed in the cow's footprint an ocean of incalculable area to an old mosquito? The farther you are removed from the universe in thought, the more will the divine Light of Paramātman radiate in you. As long as you are not freed from objects, so long will the true Principle not be cognized. All visible things vanishing, the residue will be Itself. Paramātmic Light will not shine when the dualities of the mind are not destroyed. How can Ātmic Reality be known when the homogeneity of gold and other objects is not perceived? Therefore, in order to attain Ātman, all longing for objects should cease. If all is given up then what remains is the indestructible Mokṣa, the supreme Brahmic state. Oh famous king of hunters, if after destroying your mind ever surging with the Vāsanā-s of Ajñāna in this world of objects replete with cause and effect, you give up even the Vāsanā-s of the body, then will the stainless, beneficent Principle be attained.' So saying, Muni Māṇḍavya of great Tapas returned to his own abode.

Thereafter the king of hunters withdrew into a solitary place and there began, with his subtle intelligence, to inquire into the origin of 'I': 'It is rather ludicrous to apply the epithet "I" to this body. Let me see what this body is. It is composed of flesh, bones, etc. and as such is inert. Hence

“I” is not this body. Again the ten Indriya-s are other than “I” (as seen from the epithet of “my” Indriya-s) and are inert. Hence I am not the ten Indriya-s. If “I” is not this body with Indriya-s, etc. then what remains is Jīva. Even this Jīva is known by Pratyagātman. Therefore the Jīva, which is known by Prayagātma-caitanya, cannot be termed the Ātma-tattva. Hence I shall free myself from the Jīva state. Shall I become “That” fit to be known? That full Jñāna which is immaculate and is without any Vikalpa-s is alone my Reality. This supreme Jñāna pervades, like a thread running through round pearls, through Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Rudra, Devendra, Yama and others. This supreme Jñāna-potency of Ātma-tattva is without the disease of worldly acts, has an incomparable form, pervades all quarters, is full in all objects, is subtle, without existence or non-existence, and permeates all up to Satyaloka where Brahmā lives. This Cit-śakti is the abode of all other Śakti-s (or potencies). It is only owing to a motion in this Jñāna that the diversified objects in this world exist.’

Having given up all objects, without the shackles of Vāsanā-s, freed from the delusions which follow a person even in his seventh rebirth, Suraghu maintained equality of vision over all, like one fixed immovably in his Suṣupti state. Being freed through living firmly in his Ātma-tattva, he reached the Brahmic state by means of true discrimination, like Muni Viśvāmitra of rare Tapas attaining the status of a Brahmin. Thus did Suraghu reach that Suṣupti state wherein all

actions cease, and was immovable like a light represented with its flames in a picture, without the dualities of blessing or curse, attachment or hatred, association or non-association, intelligence or non-intelligence.

Vasiṣṭha continued: Oh Rāma of mountain-like arms, hear also what took place between Suraghu of non-dual cognition and a Rājaṛṣi by the name of Parṇāda. Suraghu had a friend by the name of Parigha of the race of Pārasika, who was also a king. Finding that his subjects suffered greatly on account of drought in his realm for ten years and died in great numbers, the latter was broken-hearted. Therefore, quitting his country for the forest, he gave up all desire for food and performed Tapas, feeding himself upon dry leaves. Hence he was named Parṇāda.¹ Through such Tapas he attained Ātma-jñāna. This Muni who could at his will roam through the three worlds as if in his house appeared before king Suraghu. With reciprocal affection and love, they began to discourse upon their respective experiences.

Suraghu began: 'My heart has been filled to the brim with exquisite bliss at the approach of thy venerable self.'

Parṇāda said: 'I have also been much elevated (by thy sight) to that Jñāna state into which thou wert initiated by Muni Māṇḍavya. Oh king, art thou able to transact thy worldly business with a clear mind and

¹ Parṇāda from *parṇa* meaning leaves.

a noble and equal vision over all? Has thy body, affected by the changes of time, been free from the trammels of disease, mental or physical? Art thou able to preserve equilibrium of mind amidst the excessive pleasures of wealth? Hast thou been able to merge into Samādhi without any Saṃkalpa-s by following the path of extreme serenity and Kaivalya (aloneness), without the least fluctuation of mind? Whether he performs actions or not, an Ātma-jñānin is never out of the Samādhi state. Persons of Jñāna will always be in the Samādhi of true Niṣṭhā (meditation), albeit engaged in worldly actions. Oh liberal-minded brother, persons without complete even-mindedness will never be able to go into Samādhi, even though they may comply with the formalities of sitting in the Padma posture and offering salutations to Parabrahman. It is Ātma-jñāna alone which, forming the Agni (or fire) to the fuel of desires, constitutes the noble Samādhi. If the mind, being destroyed through concentration, cognizes Tattva-jñāna, such a Jñāna is stated by the wise to be Samādhi. The intelligence of the wise, not bound by illusion, though mindful of worldly actions, will not forget even for a moment the Ātmic Reality, eternal like time. Like Vāyu blowing freely in every direction, a Jñānin's intelligence always follows the path of the differenceless Ātma-jñāna. The wise of equal vision who are *en rapport* with the partless intelligence, having abandoned all conceptions of duality which exist but for worldly purposes, can be said to have attained the Brahmic

State. Therefore, those intelligent men who do not waste their time over bodily actions, whether one or many, but who have sharpened their intelligence through the holy sentences (of the Veda-s) will be everywhere. Thou hast cognized that Intelligence which is differenceless and wondrous. Thou hast attained the Brahmic State. Thy mind has been made calm like a full moon. Thy heart has been liberated from the pain of Ahaṁkāra and from all stains and therefore is all full. Having the firm certitude of Ātman, thou shinest everywhere as thy Self.' So said Paṇḍita to Suraghu. Suraghu then said: 'Of what avail are circuitous expressions? In short, when all longing for the fruit of action ceases and the mind looks upon all equally, being directed within itself, then Brahmic bliss arises and the matchless Jñāna-vision is developed and the firm Ātma-jñāna alone shines.'

8. THE STORY OF BHĀSA AND VILĀSA

Summary—Through this story, it is sought to show that manifold pain arises in the mind in the absence of Samādhi which leads to Brahmic bliss.

Thus did Suraghu and Parigha inquire into the nature of the world, evincing true love and respect towards one another, and perform their respective functions. No pain will afflict those who are ever engaged internally in Adhyātma-jñāna, and take

delight in the same. Oh valiant Rāma, the bull of Jīva sleeps its long sleep under the heavy shadows of Moha (delusion) in the dire forest of Saṃsāra, weltering in the mire of sinful actions, goaded by Ajñāna and lashed by the whip of sinful enjoyments, while it is bound by the strong cords of desire and is ever and anon startled by the flea-bites of uncommon diseases. Power, if it can be called real, lies in lifting up, through constant effort this bull which, groaning under the heavy load of pain and lacerated by ceaseless motion backwards and forwards, has fallen into the deep pool of numberless births. With the friendship of the wise, disciples should devise means for crossing Saṃsāra, like passengers crossing on vessels.

Whatever place is not inhabited by Ātma-jñānin-s, whose very presence is like a cool wood full of juicy fruits and fragrant flowers, is like an oasis full of venomous toads (though abounding with flowers, etc.). Are not persons who dwell therein Ajñānin-s? Wealth, friendship, Śāstra-s, kindred actions and such like are not the real means for Mokṣa; but a well-trained mind alone constitutes the means of reaching the higher state of Ātman. If the mind is made receptive to the higher influence and spiritual inquiry begins, then it will reach the higher life. If a ripe mind regards this poisonous tenement of flesh in the same light as fuel or a tile, then there is no doubt that the all-full Jñāna, longed after by the Deva-s, will be attained. Should the unobscured Turya (fourth stage) vision be developed in which Jñāna-light shines

steadily with its pure flames—that Jñāna-light which is like the great ocean beyond all words, incomparable, attractionless and alone—then such a state has not a parallel and can best be described as Suṣupti which is its nearest approach and is but a poor simile. This Turya state is all-pervading like Ākāśa which contains potentially in itself all forms. If the Ahaṃkāra of the base mind dies, then the mind shines as the Brahmic bliss in all objects and as the Paramātmic Reality. The evidence for its characteristics can be found only in oneself. No words can describe it. It can only be experienced by each one within himself. All limitless things are of the nature of Ātman only. If this mind of excessive differentiations is absorbed without parts, then the Reality of Brahman, the immaculate Deva of Deva-s who manifests himself as these movable and fixed objects, external as well as internal, will shine in its own nature. It is only after this experience that all Vāsanā-s for objects will cease; that the light of the differenceless Principle will dawn; that through an equal vision over all, the destruction of heterogeneity will take place as a matter of course. It is this experience that Mahātman-s¹ always have. If after having destroyed the materially minded Manas through the discriminative (or higher) Manas, one does not know his Ātmic Principle, never will the Saṃsāric pain cease. With the extinction of the mind, bliss will arise and then Ātma-jñāna shines.

¹ Great Souls.

To illustrate this experience, I will narrate a story to thee, Oh sweet flower of thy (namely solar) race: Two Muni-s, the sons of Muni Atri of great Tapas, lived in his hermitage on the hills of Sahya. They went by the appellations of Bhāsa and Vilāsa and loved one another with good feelings which waxed day by day. Their minds were so united that they seemed like offshoots of one and the same trunk. On the death of their parents, they sorrowfully went through the necessary obsequies. Then grief struck and in tears through their mental bondage, they bid adieu to one another and parted in different directions. After they had lived for a long time in the woods and had become reduced in body through extreme Tapas, they completely denuded themselves of all desire. Then they again met.

With his mind and eye glowing with love, Muni Vilāsa spoke first: 'My true kinsman in this ever-growing world, thou hast come to me as my Prāṇa. Where hast thou been living all this while? Hast thou been freed from thy mental pain? Hast thou cognized thy Ātmic Reality as common to all? Hast thou acquired full Jñāna? Oh Bhāsa, art thou happy?' To which Bhāsa, looking at the face of his brother who had a mind ripened by truth, replied: 'Oh my kinsman who art as dear as my Prāṇa, through the sheer force of my destiny have I been fortunate enough to visit thee. My mind has been rendered calm. How can I who am whirling in this Samsāra obtain happiness? How can the absolute good arise in me, so long as

I do not know all that should be known, so long as the mind is not destroyed, so long as the wheel of births is not arrested? How can the transcendental happiness arise in me, so long as the seed of desire in my mind is not destroyed, so long as Jñāna is not cognized directly, so long as the homogeneous state is not attained, so long as Brahma-jñāna is not realized? Till then, pain alone will accrue to a person. In persons who have given up all the good results of Ātma-tattva which is the panacea for curing the disease of Ajñāna, the poisonous disease of dire rebirth will grow in strength. Without Jñāna all the hosts of Jīva-s in this world, entangled in the midst of pleasure and pain and fluctuating in the ups and downs of birth and death, will never make true progress, being like parched leaves.'

9. THE STORY OF VĪTAHAVYA

Summary—In this story, it is sought to show that mental abnegation and control of Prāṇa are the two requisites for the control and quiescence of the mind.

In course of time, while the above two personages were living together engaged in inquiries into their respective inner experiences, the true Jñāna which brings about the happiness of Kaivalya dawned in them. There is no other path to destroy the pain-giving mind bound by the cord of desire than Jñāna.

A stainless mind without attractions, though engaged in worldly acts, will never be bound thereby. A mind with attractions, though engaged in severe Tapas, will ever be in bondage. A Jīva which is without internal craving (or attractions) and inclined to good actions alone will never have the characteristics of actor and enjoyer, whether it performs external actions or not.

At this, Śrī Rāma asked: What is meant by attraction (or association)? What is that attraction which leads to Mokṣa? What to bondage? How is this bondage to be ended? To which Vasiṣṭha replied: 'Belief in (the permanency of) the body, without discriminating between the body and its occupant, and contemplating the body alone is what is meant by attraction. Such a course leads to bondage. The conception that all is Ātmic Reality and that there is nothing for one to love or hate (in this world) is non-attraction. Such non-attraction arises in those Jīvan-mukta-s who have been freed of all pain. That state of non-attraction of the mind, when neither I nor any other self exists for it and when, at its will, it enjoys or does not enjoy the pleasures of the world, should be known as the path leading to Mokṣa. Such persons neither court action nor inaction; abdicating all fruits of action, they do not care which of the above two courses they adopt. The wise say that these are persons without attractions. Know also that there is no attraction in one, if he renounces the fruit of actions with the mind and not through the abdication of the Karman-s themselves. Through it, the stains

of the ever-growing actions will cease and Mokṣa is gained. It is through attraction that the long chain of births as worms, bees, etc. is undergone, disappearing at every stage like bubbles on the surface of the ocean.

Attraction is twofold. One is called Vandhya (fruitless) and the other is called Avandhya (fruitful). The former pertains to the ignorant, while the latter is the ornament of all those who have cognized the Ātma-tattva. It is this latter which generates Ātma-jñāna and discrimination and through them arrests the rebirths which took place during long æons of time. The former brings about the ever recurrent cycles of existence in this world through the absence of Jñāna and devotion to worldly objects. Know clearly, my son, the true nature of the two kinds of attraction. Viṣṇu, bearing discus and conch, protects through his grace all the universe without in the least being disconcerted by the manifold actions done by him through his Avandhya attraction. Similarly, Siddha-s of true Jñāna become the protectors of this earth, by sporting on it through the above attraction. The mind, mistaking bad things for good and attracted by enjoyments, wallows in them, like a vulture preying upon carrion. To those who are immersed in the evils of Vandhya attractions, all hells are dwelling places. With this fuel of Vandhya attractions, they feed the flames therein. But when the Jñāna-vision of one is diverted from the visible things of Māyā, and the mind is divested of its attractions towards material life, then is the Jīvan-mukti state attained.

Now hear of the true nature of the mind of a Jīvan-mukta who is always in different Avasthā-s (states), who is in the minds of all creatures and who performs all actions. Without in the least attaching themselves to actions, thoughts, objects, Ākāśa, ups and downs, quarters, external enjoyments, the five organs, the internal Prāṇa-s, head, face, tongue, eyes, nose, brow, Ahaṃkāra, Jīva, the Ākāśa of the heart, the waking state, the dreaming state, dreamless slumber, the five colours beginning with white, the diversified colours, fluctuation or steadiness, beginning, middle, or end, proximity or distance, the limbs of the body, the many substances, Ātman, the Tanmātra-s (rudimentary properties) beginning with sound, bliss, going and returning and the attributes of time, the mind of a Jīvan-mukta is quiescent in Jñāna and enjoys Brahmic bliss in a state of Vairāgya, though associating with visible things. Such Jīvan-mukta-s who, having no material attractions, do not associate themselves with the distorted consciousness of the world, should and ought to perform actions in this world. The effects of actions whether performed or not by a Jīvan-mukta, the enjoyer of bliss, will never affect him, like the dark clouds which never sully Ākāśa. Such a Jīva is merged with the Ātman, as pellucid as crystal, and is replete with Jñāna and quiescence after attaining the end of all objects. They are great men, full of Jñāna bliss and great intelligence, and will float over their sense-organs like peacock's feathers. Their minds are stable, like the mountain Mahāmeru.

With refrainment from sensual objects, the mind will be destroyed. Such a state can be called the Suṣupti of Jāgrat, devoid of all actions. With the ceaseless practice of this state, the wise say that the partless and ripe state is induced. Through being established in this Turya state, the one above all bliss (Ānandātīta) is reached, which state is indescribable and pertains to one's Self. The Ānandātīta is the great bliss of Jñānātīta. A person in this state is he who can be called the secondless Yogin. This state is also called Turyātīta. Freed from bondage-giving rebirth, as well as from the diverse kinds of self-identification with objects arising out of Tamo-guṇa, the supreme bliss (of Jīva) merges itself into its imperishable Reality of Sat, like salt with water.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* and other Śruti-s treating of the true path deal, Oh Rāma, with the solitary Reality of Parātattva which occupies the neutral centre between inertness and intelligence. When objects and Jñāna are absorbed into one another, then is the Paramārtha (real) state attained, in which the direct, supreme experience of happiness is achieved. This itself may be stated to be the Brahmic essence. When the seen and sight merge into one another (in the seer), then is there the experience of Ānanda (bliss). Bondage is so called because of subjection to objects; otherwise Mokṣa ensues. That state of direct experience in which the seen and sight merge into one another is unattended by pain. Therefore, let the mind always have this state as its beacon light. This state is called

Jāgrat-suṣupti. It is also the Turya state. Then Ātman is neither gross nor subtle, neither perceptive nor non-perceptive, neither intelligent nor inert, neither Sat nor Asat, neither I nor any other, neither one nor many, nor the universe; but it is the seat or source of mind, Indriya-s, etc. As it is above all states, it is not conditioned but is the All.

That which is called Mokṣa is neither in Devaloka nor Pātāla nor earth. When all desires are destroyed, the extinction of the expansive mind alone is Mokṣa. If at any time there arises in the mind within, any longing to attain Mokṣa, then it will begin to revive again. With the increase of the Manana (or the meditations) of the mind, births and deaths will not cease and bondage firmly takes its root. If Ātma-tattva is attained, which is above all and pervades all objects, how can there be bondage? Therefore destroy at its root, mind and its thoughts. Those who, through their immaculate and all-full mind, have attained quiescence and known their own Self never long for anything. This non-desire is the axe with which the forest-trees of accidents are felled, and is the state of Brahmic bliss, and the flower-bunch in the tree of contentment and quiescence. With the development of non-desire, all weaknesses of the heart will fly away. In the eyes of those who have decorated themselves with the ornament of non-desire, the whole earth is insignificant like a cow's footprint, even Mahāmeru is but a paltry seed, all the quarters are as a bird's nest and the three worlds are trash only.

Those who have worshipped their Ātmic Reality which is other than the body, will not be conscious of the existence of the body, though working in it. Like a sugar-candy which, though exposed to heat, or cut, does not lose its taste, an illumined Jñānin never loses his centre even amidst the many illusions of the world. Like a woman who performs her household duties, whilst her mind is engrossed in her distant paramour, a Jñānin always centres his mind upon the Brahmic state. Through the absence of desire for objects, quiescence of the mind will produce Mokṣa, in association with the body or not. Those who are happy in the relinquishment of material desires (while in the body) are the blissful Jīvan-mukta-s; but those who are entrammelled therein are bound; the Videha-mukta-s are far above these two classes of persons.

Such Jīvan-mukta-s always transact their present duties. They neither long for things in the future nor ruminate upon things of the past. Their minds are neither attracted towards men bound by the worldly pleasures nor affected by grief. They appear as devotees amongst devotees; conduct themselves tactfully amongst men of duplicity; as children amongst children; as old men amongst the old; as the puissant amongst the puissant; as youths among the young; and as grief stricken while in sympathy with the grieved. They enjoy bliss with their intelligence, virtuous acts are their glory, they have Jñāna unsullied by Ajñāna, are illumined and of indomitable heart. Such

immaculate Jīvan-mukta-s would never be disconcerted, even should the sun grow cold or the moon turn dark or the fire begin to burn with its flames downwards.

All things visible are Jñāna only. Knowing all things truly as they are, such Jīvan-mukta-s never marvel at out-of-the-way occurrences. This world appears diversified because of the fluctuations of the mind, like a row of pearls appearing on a bunch of peacock feathers when waved in the atmosphere above, or like innumerable eddies arising in water through undulations in it.

At this Rāma questioned Vasiṣṭha: Through what does the mind fluctuate? Through what will it not fluctuate? What is the path (or means) to control it?

Vasiṣṭha replied: The fluctuation of the mind is associated with the mind itself (or is an attribute of it), like oil in sesame seed or whiteness in snow. There are two paths to destroy this fluctuation, namely Yoga and Jñāna. Yoga is that which makes the actions of the mind integrated (or makes the mind concentrate itself upon one object only). But Jñāna is that which enables one to enjoy happiness in all (objects). Persons who have as their ornament the supreme Veda-s hold that the mind is nothing but the fluctuation of Prāṇa. With the control of Prāṇa, the mind is also controlled. With the control of the mind's fluctuation, rebirth will cease, like the daily actions that cease to be performed at sunset.

Again Rāma interposed: In this tabernacle of the body, what is the means of arresting the motion of

Prāṇa and other Vāyu-s which vibrate ceaselessly and with great velocity in the Ākāśa of the heart? To which Vasiṣṭha replied: Having, obtained, through a study of Ātma-jñāna books, the grace of a Guru, after ceaseless practice of Vairāgya and liberation from the trammels of Saṃsāra, if one is filled with non-desire and is in Brahmic meditation, then through the means adopted for the control of Prāṇa, the mind will be controlled. The fluctuation of Prāṇa can be arrested, Oh Rāma of the colour of clouds, by the steady practice of Prāṇāyāma,¹ such as Pūraka, etc. done in a solitary place and with a cheerful heart and by meditation on the Jñāna within. If the Vṛtti-jñāna of the mind is destroyed and the Suṣupti stage is reached through much meditation upon the true nature of the sound uttered at the end of Praṇava, then will Prāṇa be arrested. If the tip of the tongue be reversed and raised up to the uvula, thereby making the air go up the gullet, then will Prāṇa be checked. If Vṛtti-jñāna ends by making the Prāṇa flow twelve inches from the tongue on the upward path, then will Prāṇa be controlled. If in the middle of the two eyebrows, the vision of the pupils be destroyed through the mind's quiescence and Vikalpa-jñāna ends, then will Prāṇa be controlled. Through these paths as well as through the grace and diverse words and initiations of the Guru and through the destruction of the many

¹ Prāṇāyāma is the control of Prāṇa or breath by Pūraka (inhalation), Reçaka (exhalation) and Kumbhaka (cessation).

Samkalpa-s and illusory differences, the fluctuation of Prāṇa will be controlled. Through the practice, without effort, of these Yoga means, freedom from rebirth will gradually follow. Having arrested the fluctuation of Prāṇa, the mind also will become quiescent. With the quiescence of the mind, the Supreme State alone will remain, the state of 'That' from which all Vikalpa-s return divested of heterogeneities.

Here the victorious Rāma interposed: Now that you have described the path of Yoga whereby the mind reaches that state of equilibrium in which it does not travel in the direction of the senses, please enlighten me hereafter about Tattva-jñāna. To which the Muni replied: The firm conviction that Brahman alone is the self-shining one everywhere, without beginning, middle or end is true Jñāna. The certitude that the potencies (Śakti-s) of all the differentiated illusory objects are no other than Ātman is the worship of Ātman. The clear cognition that all worlds are only the form of Parabrahman which is the only true Principle in the three worlds is Pūrṇa (the Plenum). All worlds are of the nature of Ātman alone. How then can there be existence or non-existence? How can there exist the illusory differences of bondage or Mokṣa? In fact there are no visible things or mind. Truly does Brahman pervade all. All these are the non-dual Jñānākāśa alone. Bondage and Mokṣa do not truly exist (but are relative only). The attributeless, great Brahman alone pervades everywhere as the shining Ātman. The

mind being extinguished, discern the unity of all through thy intelligence. If Ātmic Reality is fully cognized then differences between trees, mountains, clothes, etc. will vanish. With them, Saṃkalpa-s will also be swept away. If Cidābhāsa (the distorted consciousness) as well as objects in this world are scrutinized from the beginning to the end, it will be found that they reach the defectless quiescent state.

May you ever be in that quiescent state. Through the mind associating itself with dualities as well as the illusions of birth and death, the incomparable Reality manifests itself as names and forms, like water appearing as waves, foam, bubbles, etc. What enjoyment can bring under its clutches those who are, through their introvision, following the path of Brahman? Delicious enjoyments and other enemies of spiritual progress never agitate minds engaged in intense inquiry into spiritual truths. Will a rock be ever moved by soft zephyrs? All names and forms are in Saṃkalpa, like waves in an agitated pond; but they are not in the heart which is still as a lagoon. Hearts that never give way even under the most trying circumstances are those of persons who have gained Mokṣa, who cognize directly the stainless Principle with true bliss.

Now I shall describe another path leading to Mokṣa. Listen to it attentively, Oh valiant Rāma. A great Tapasvin, named Vītahavya, lived in the Vindhya hills. Through excessive desire, he was for long engaged in the performance of Karman-s and

became afflicted with mental and bodily maladies as well as action in dire Saṃsāra. In order to escape from this pain, he gave up all Karman-s and wanted to practise Nirvikalpa Samādhi. For this purpose, he erected a hermitage of leaves in which he seated himself in the lotus posture on a deerskin with his hands resting on his heels. In this posture of Samādhi, little by little, he made his mind return to itself and at last controlled it firmly within his heart. All external objects having been gradually severed from contact with his mind, his mind was rendered steady. With this stainless mind, he thought:

‘After I bring into control my mind, it is again agitated by Prāṇa and floats about like a dried leaf tossed by wind. It then flits from one object to another. Like a monkey jumping from tree to tree, it hops about from one object to another. Having known the five Jñānendriya-s, the eyes, etc. as the mere avenues of the mind and the generators of Abhimāna (identification with objects), I am the one who sees through them all. Oh perishable Indriya-s why do you perturb yourselves in vain? I am the one Lord of Consciousness and the witness of all. I who am truly of supreme intelligence was, when associated with these Indriya-s, degraded as if descending from Svarga to Pātāla. Jñāna never comes in close contact with the organs, like serpents and wayfarers, Brahmin-s and Caṇḍāla-s (outcastes). Oh mind which sets itself against the spiritual world and goes begging in all the spacious four quarters, of what

avail are thine vain efforts? Thou alone shalt dally in this world, preserving thine equilibrium. It is wrong to mistake thee for Jñāna. True Jñāna is never found to be in company with a vagrant mind. Oh perverse intelligence which, through Ahaṁkāra, confounds "I" with objects, it is really absurd to apply the epithet "bliss" to thee. Destroy the sense of separateness arising from the delusion of Ahaṁkāra. Thy real nature is above all inquiry. Like darkness disappearing before the sun, thou art destroyed through spiritual inquiry. As thou wert invisible and art now without form, thou wilt also disappear in the future (invisibly). Oh mind, the end to which thou aspirest now is a grand one indeed. With divine grace, thou wilt be suffused with bliss, and reaching a quiescent state, will revel in the blissful Turya state of my Ātmic Reality.'

With this inquiry, Vitahavya firmly controlled his mind, without being in the least agitated by the senses. Like flames which have consumed the fuel and are absorbed in themselves, Prāṇa gradually merged into itself. With his subtle vision at the tip of his nose, his eyes began to bloom partially, lotus-like. He then passed 300 years in Samādhi as in a moment, with his head, neck, body and limbs motionless and erect. Then his body was buried in a hillock of sand formed by floods of water. Awakening from his Samādhi, the Muni found his body fixed in the earth. All the avenues of his body being blocked up by the earth around, the Prāṇa-s were unable to circulate

freely. But when he began to concentrate his mind and pervade the heart within, as in a dream, he began to perceive the following things: He spent 100 years as a Tapasvin on the slopes of the Kailāsa¹ hills; then as a Vidyādhara for another 100 years; as Devendra worshipped by the Deva-s in Devaloka for five Yuga-s; then as Gaṇeśa,² the beloved of Parameśvara, wearing the moon on his matted locks.

Thus did the Muni see his former lives pass in review in his divine vision, which was able to know the three periods, past, present and future, and was developed through submissive service rendered unto Lord Parameśvara. Then with the destruction of those bodies, he saw his present body springing into existence. In order to lift this body out of the earth in which it was deeply buried, he went to the sun with concentrated mind and Puryaṣṭaka (subtle) body to fetch Piṅgala³ from there. No sooner did the Muni reach the sun, than the latter divined the object of the Muni and sent Piṅgala with him in order that the Muni's subtle body might enter and animate the gross one lying on the Vindhya hills. Arriving at the spot, Piṅgala cleared off the earth accumulated round the body of the Muni and thus paved the way for the subtle body to enter and animate the gross one. Having fulfilled his mission Piṅgala departed.

¹ Kailāsa, name of the hills upon which Śiva is said to reside.

² The son of Śiva.

³ Piṅgala is the Solar Nāḍī in man, one of the three, Idā, Piṅgalā and Suṣumnā.

Vitahavya then bathed and made the necessary ablutions and worshipped the sun. Now that his gross body was animated by his intelligent mind, it began to shine with all its attributes and actions. Being full of mental restraint, benevolence, quiescence, spiritual wealth, fine intelligence, tenderness and contentment, his mind was not in the least attracted towards objects. He spent his days on the banks of the river which flows on the rocks of the Vindhya-s, meditating with a pure mind upon the supreme as follows: 'Till now, I have been controlling all my organs. Now I shall merge into Cinmātra (the absolute Consciousness), the one remaining after all else is destroyed, and there remain immovable as a rock. Though dawning (or living) in this world, I shall be like the sun that has set; though set, I shall be like the sun that is ever dawning. Though engaged in the actions of the lower mind, I shall be like one who is in Suṣupti; though in Suṣupti, I shall be like one awake in this world (in the Jāgrat state). Being in the Turya state where no difference exists, I shall be the motionless light, though moving in this body.' Having thus contemplated, he was in Samādhi for six days like a sleeping wayfarer and cognized Reality. Thus did Vītahavya enjoy perfect bliss in the state of a Jīvan-mukta.

All pleasure and pain, attachment and hatred, etc. having been destroyed, the Muni freed himself from the trammels of rebirth and Karman-s and then contemplated reaching Kaivalya in a disembodied

state. For this purpose, this Siddha, Vitahavya, entered one day a mountain cave and there seating himself in the lotus posture, reflected thus: 'Oh soft Desire, thou shalt become non-desire; Oh Anger, thou shalt be transformed into quiescence of mind; I have long amused myself with various tricks; Oh Enjoyments, I bid adieu to you; enough, enough of all the frolics I had with thee; Oh Material Joy that made me oblivious of the pain-free Mokṣa, I give thee also my parting farewell. Oh Pain, is it not due to thy scorching effects upon my body that I have been able to attain Ātma-tattva? Thou hast been the cause of my merging into the state of Mokṣa. Shall I not be an ungrateful wretch if I do not pay thanks to thee, my saviour? Oh Body, my long-standing friend, I abandon thee; thou hast wrought thy own destruction through the full development of true Jñāna. Oh dazzling Passion, please hearken to my words. Do not hereafter stumble or be disheartened, since I have become balanced in mind and have severed my connection with thee. Oh Virtuous Actions, as you have rescued me from falling into terrible and murderous hell and made me reach Mokṣa soon, I salute you with true love. May you live long. Oh brothers and friends of all Jīva-s, I part from you all. May you prosper.'

So saying, he took farewell of them all and gave up completely his mind and the three kinds of Īṣaṇā-s (desire for wealth, son and wife). Reaching the Jñāna Bhūmi (Jñāna state), he uttered softly Praṇava and

gave up all the objects which arose through Saṃkalpa, external and internal, gross and subtle, in all the three worlds. Through the thread-like elongated sound at the end of Praṇava, he dispelled all sensual objects, like wind blowing away odour. Darkness appeared before him and then disappeared with light, as if darkness was inseparable from Ākāśa. Light arose only to share the same fate and disappear in a moment. Then at last, both darkness and light vanished. Remaining steadily in this state, he renounced the mind as if it were a piece of straw. Being filled with Jñāna, his consciousness was like that of a child and he annihilated thought for about a quarter of a minute or half a minute. He was in the Jñāna-state, like Vāyu that is free from movement. He was the absolute Cit. He was the absolute Sat. First, he was immovable like Mahāmeru in the Jāgrat-Suṣupti state. Being established in it, he easily reached the Turya state. Then the incomparable Muni was that matchless Principle which, being beyond all words, is with and without bliss and which is Sat and Asat. This is that Principle which is denominated Void by atheists, Parabrahman by Brahmovādin-s, Vijñāna by Vijñāna doctrinists, Puruṣa by Sāṃkhya-s, Īśa by Yogin-s, Śiva by persons upholding Śivāgama-s, Kāla (Time) by Kāla doctrinists, the Madhyama by Mādhyamika-s and the all-pervading Principle by those who look equally upon all.

This Muni became 'That' which is the final conclusion of all Śāstra-s, which is seen by all, which

is known by all, which is the All, which permeates through all spheres, which is the beneficent one without motion, which illuminates all lights, which is found to be one through one's own experience, which is at the same time both one and many and which is both stained and unstained, and yet is not all these. He¹ lived for twenty thousand years in this state of Īśa, the Lord, that is without birth and death, without beginning and yet with beginning, non-dual and yet many, stainless and yet stained, and more immaculate than Ākāśa, and he roamed through the world as he willed with true exultation of heart. Having destroyed his mind past all resurrection, this supreme Jñānin, Vītahavya, was soon absorbed in the non-dual state.

10. THE CONCLUSION OF UPASĀNTI PRAKARAṆA

Summary—Having in this Prakaraṇa explained the means of rejecting the attraction of sensual objects in order to obtain quiescence of mind, the author, in summarizing this Prakaraṇa of nine stories, impresses upon us the idea that quiescence of mind leads to quiescence of the universe.

After Vasiṣṭha had spoken thus, Rāghava addressed him: How is it we do not find in a Jīvan-mukta's

¹ He refers here to the soul as an entity.

body such higher psychical powers as walking in the skies, etc.? To which Vasiṣṭha was graciously pleased to reply: Those who do not have full Jñāna are subject to bondage in this world and develop those powers through medicines, Mantra-s, actions, time or skill; but these Siddhi-s do not pertain legitimately to a true Jñānin. The latter is ever engaged in the Reality of Ātmic Vision. The Jñānin-s ever rest in Jñāna (Ātman) through Jñāna (spiritual wisdom) and never indulge in the desire to levitate in the Ākāśa, etc. The heterogeneous worldly objects are nothing but Māyā. Those victors who have trampled on Māyā never sink into it again. If Jñānin-s long after them, then no doubt Siddhi-s will arise through the above-mentioned means. Medicines, Mantra-s, etc. can confer Siddhi-s on one, but never the beneficent Mokṣa. If a desire wells up for attaining a Siddhi, then with effort it can be developed; but desire for Siddhi-s tends to bondage and does not arise in the hearts of Jñānin-s. With the extinction of all desires, Ātma-Jñāna will dawn, but those who are lost in Siddhi-s which generate desire will not attain Ātman.

Here Rāma interposed and questioned Vasiṣṭha thus: What is the cause of Yogin-s living for such long periods as a Kalpa?

Vasiṣṭha replied: With the motion of Prāṇa, they would move; otherwise they are immovable as a rock. Those Yogin-s who are able to control Prāṇa live for a long period. If the motion of Prāṇa and therefore the mind be arrested both internally and externally,

then death and dotage fly to a great distance. Then there abide in the body Dhātu-s (spiritual substances) such as are never expelled at any time. Those only can be said to have truly cognized Reality who, walking on the path of Ātma-Jñāna, eradicate desire, thus making their intelligence clear and tearing asunder the bonds of the mind.

Here Rāma queried: If with the dawning of discrimination, the mind is absorbed in Reality, where will the four qualities,¹ Maitrī (benevolence), etc. have their abode?

Vasiṣṭha replied: The destruction of the mind is twofold as the mind is composite in character, being Rūpa (with form) and Arūpa (formless). The destruction of the Rūpa mind is achieved in the Jīvan-mukti stage, while that of the other takes place in the Vidcha-mukti stage. The Rūpa mind generates pain; with its annihilation, bliss increases. You should so destroy the mind that it cannot later rear its head again. Identifying itself with the attributes of matter, it is not able to cognize Reality and hence groans with pain. This mind is Jīva. This mind, ever hankering for pleasure and pain, is the seed of all Māyā. The wise say that the mind can be said to be destroyed only when a person looks with equal vision over all and is not affected by pleasure or pain, like the Meru mountain unruffled by wind. Whoever remains unconcerned

¹ The four qualities are benevolence, contentment, compassion and disinclination to vice.

even in the midst of enormous wealth, terrible accidents, extreme poverty, death, illusions or extreme intelligence, such men can be said to have their minds destroyed. The removal of Avidyā, which is the mind itself, tends to its destruction and produces ripe (spiritual) intelligence. Such a mind which does not subject itself to obnoxious rebirths through the pure Vāsanā-s associated with the four qualities, benevolence, etc. pertains to the Jīvan-mukta-s. Thus is the Rūpa (form) destroyed in the quiescent mind. It is in this mind that the above-mentioned four qualities will grow like a full-blown lotus in spring.

The destruction of the Arūpa mind is wrought by Videha-mukta-s. Kaivalya in a disembodied state can be attained only when Sattva, which originates the four above-mentioned qualities, also perishes. There is no other road to the destruction of this Arūpa mind than doing away with Sattva. The Brahmic State is that which has and which has not Guṇa-s and non-Guṇa-s, wealth and non-wealth, dawning and setting, contentment and discontent, light and darkness, as well as day and night and the three Saṁdhyā-s (junction periods), and which therefore occupies the neutral centre between the pairs of opposites. It alone is the asylum of all who have mastery over the phenomena of Saṁsāra like Ākāśa, the receptacle of Vāyu, etc. Those great and transcendental personages who, having the Ākāśa as their body, live in Brahmic bliss without pain or Tamas or Rajas are truly saints who have annihilated their minds.

Here Rāma interrupted him: What is the seed of this Māyā ever increasing like a vine? What is its seed? What the seed of this seed? And what is the seed of the last? Please throw light upon all these four seeds. Vasiṣṭha answered: This body is the seed from which are generated the sprouts of pleasure and pain, giving rise to the ever-gyrating creeper of Samsāra. The cause of this seed of the body is the mind which, following the track of desire, is the receptacle of pain arising from birth and death. It is through the mind that the hosts of bodies which do not exist, though seeming to exist, arise beyond number. It enjoys these bodily objects as in a dream.

This tree which is the painful mind, which is encircled by the creepers of worldly actions, has two seeds. Of them, one is the motion of Prāṇa and the other is Vāsanā-s. Know, Oh king, who art an ornament to the solar race, that these are the four seeds. The one all-pervading Jñāna becomes the visible Jñāna through the motion of Prāṇa. If this Prāṇa is prevented from expanding in all directions, then it will tend to aid one's (progress or) welfare. The intelligence gets tacked to visible things through desire. These visible things are a source of perpetual harassment. If this intelligence be in the Suṣupti state without ever returning from it (to the lower states), then it is Nirvāṇa; it is Ātman; it is the immaculate State. There is none else besides it. Therefore, rebirth will cease if the longing for sensual objects arising through Prāṇa's fluctuation and Vāsanā-s be gradually minimized. The excessive

diversity of thought constitutes the mind. With such a mind alone, all persons live in this world. It is only to control this fickle mind that intelligent Yogin-s perform Prāṇāyāma (control of Prāṇa). The wise say that the control of Prāṇa leads to that of the mind and causes equality of vision over all. It generates happiness and deters sensual objects from arising in the mind.

Now as to the second seed of the mind which illuminates all objects and being coupled with Vāsanā-s enjoys externally the objects: Vāsanā-s are the ignorance which enslaves us in sensual objects, impeding true discrimination of the past and future, arising through firm determination. The Ātman (or ego), subjecting itself to the clutches of Vāsanā-s, which transform it into the object it sees to the exclusion of others, fancies that object to be real and is deluded. Through the frenzy created by the strength (or vibrations) of the Vāsanā-s, it sees all things in the same illusory light. To define this mind clearly: it can be stated to be the stainful visible things; or the identification of 'I' with that which is not 'I', or that which thinks that to be real which is not so. Through this mind, birth, death and dotage are caused. As the mercurial mind arises through its gradual association with objects, birth and death also arise. It is only when the mind renounces all, without any attraction or repulsion for objects, that it will cease to exist. If thoughts are destroyed through the extinction of Vāsanā-s, then quiescence will result and the mind's destruction will ensue. If there is no thought of any worldly objects

or of any place, how can the mind exist (separate) in the void Ākāśa? Therefore, Oh bountiful Rāma, forms exist in the mind so long as the Vāsanā-s are coupled with them. How can the mind survive in those wise persons who, being more immaculate than Ākāśa itself, know that visible things do not form the subject of Karman-s to be indulged in?

It is said that the cognition of the truth, after true discrimination, that one is not in this world and that the universe is not, constitutes mind's destruction. The wise say that the mind denudes itself of its form, even though engaged in actions, if after dissolving all things in itself, it becomes tranquil. Those Jīvan-mukta-s who have disentangled themselves from the meshes of Vāsanā-s live in this world only to wear out their Prārabdha, like a potter's wheel continuing to revolve through the impetus given by the potter. They are in possession of the pure Vāsanā-s without any rebirth or pain. They have a mind cognizing the Reality and are without (the lower) mind; they have reached the most consecrated of spots, Jñāna. It is these Jīvan-mukta-s who, giving up the body, attain the Cidākāśa and are termed the lofty ones. Thus, the two seeds of mind, as stated before, are fluctuations of Prāṇa and Vāsanā-s. If either of them ceases to exist, both perish. Through Vāsanā-s, Prāṇa's motion is caused; through Prāṇa's motion Vāsanā-s ensue. So we may say that these are the seeds and the sprouts of the ripe, dried fruit of the mind. These two have their root in the visible things of the universe.

Therefore if the visible things are destroyed, then Prāṇa's fluctuation and Vāsanā-s will be eradicated completely. Mental actions are the seed of visible things. If the intelligence does not come into play, then visible things will cease to exist. For, can sesame oil exist in the absence of the sesame seed? The dawning Jñāna produces a kind of creation. Through Saṃkalpa, this Jñāna sees in itself the visible things. Just as in a dream, though one forgets himself yet he sees all things through some inherent power in himself, so visible things are known through Vṛtti-jñāna. Those who, through their pure discrimination, have destroyed this reflected intelligence, whether they have previously analysed it or not, will also have destroyed dire Saṃsāra. So say the great ones. Do not the visible things entail immeasurable pain? Oh Rāma, the absence of visible things and the non-cognition of objects generate Nirvāṇic bliss. May you be without any oscillations of the mind, in blissful ignorance of all objects and yet not in an inert state. Thou alone art the Paramātman, the Jñāna, in which state visible things are not seen. This is undoubtedly true. So said Vasiṣṭha.

Rāma asked the Muni: How can non-intelligence arise where there are no visible things? How can visible things vanish from where there is no Jñāna?

Vasiṣṭha replied: Ātman, the all-pervading one without any attraction, which has neither the power of knowing nor not-knowing any inert object, is without visible things or intelligence. If it should

attain that Jñāna not linked to visible things, it will be without visible things or Vṛtti-jñāna, though performing all actions. He alone in whom the heart Ākāśa (in which Ātman is) does not come in contact with (or is affected by) visible things, is a Jñānin. He alone is not inert and is without perception of material objects. He alone is a Jīvan-mukta. Such a person, through voluntary destruction of all Vāsanā-s, is like a child or a mute in intelligence. In that state, all visible things being abandoned, he attains full Ātma-jñāna without any Vṛtti-jñāna. Then his Jñāna will not revert to any object; freed from pain through Nirvikalpa Samādhi, he will be filled with bliss, like the blue colour permeating throughout the Ākāśa. A Jñānin therefore is always steadfast in such Samādhi, without longing for visible things, and always revels in the bliss of his own Ātman. Whether standing or walking or talking or touching, he is dissociated from them, not having any attraction or repulsion to them though engaged in ordinary worldly actions.

The seed of this Jñāna (or intelligence) is the noble Sattā-mātra. Out of this primeval Sattā, Jñāna rises as a light from flame. This Sattā has two aspects. One is heterogeneity and the other is homogeneity. Pots, pictures and other objects, although they appear diverse, are yet one, as they are only the differentiations of the one Sat (substance, namely earth). The seat of Sat¹ is that wherein it is Sattā alone, non-dual

¹ Sat is existence and hence is applied to the many objects which change. Sattā is be-ness and hence is here applied to the

without any attributes. Besides, thou shalt have to free thyself from the three Sattā-s of Kāla (time), Deśa (space) and Vastu (substance) and merge thyself in the non-dual Sattā-mātra. Though from one standpoint, the three Sattā-s mentioned above, when they are divested of their actions (or characteristics), are really the non-dual Sattā, yet they are not in their manifestation, Sattā, the non-dual one. As these three Sattā-s are the causes of diversified actions in this world, how can they be called the immaculate Sattā (which cannot be a cause)? Having meditated solely upon this non-dual Sattā which is common to all, may you pervade all quarters with Self-bliss. That which is the end of the Sattā (Sattā-sāmānya) common to all, that state is the seed of this pure Sattā. From the end of this Sattā-sāmānya, Cīta, etc. of this universe arise. It is at this terminal point that all Saṃkalpa-s have to be relinquished and the enjoyment of bliss takes place. It is this that is the primal seed. The state of Jñāna bliss (after that) has no seed. Those whose Jñāna is absorbed everlastingly in this bliss will never be drowned in pain. This is the cause of all; but it is a causeless cause. It is the essence of all; but there is no essence in it. In that great glass, all objects differentiated by this or that, will appear reflected as images, like trees on the bank of a river appearing in its waters. It alone is the stainless.

one principle from which many objects arise. Sattā-mātra is the eternal, absolute Principle.

It alone is the ageless. It alone is Ātmic Reality. With the attainment of that state, the mind becomes quiescent. May you, after cognizing it firmly, become that Ātman! May you attain that Nirvāṇic state!

Here Rāma said: Thou hast been pleased to vouchsafe an explanation about the nature of these seeds. Through what efforts can one soon attain this Jñāna bliss? Vasiṣṭha replied: Through properly directed efforts in the direction of those serial seeds (or causes) of pain that I described before, the Nirvāṇic state can soon be acquired. In order to attain that state which is above all the other states, and at the other end of the Sattā common to all, you will have to kill out, by your endeavours, the hosts of Vāsanā-s and cognize your Tattva-jñāna; and then at the very moment when you are merged in the imperishable state of your Reality, you will have attained that Tattva state. Should the Sattā-sāmānya described above be first reached by you, then with slightly increased efforts, you will attain this state. Therefore direct your meditation towards the acquisition of this Sattā-sāmānya state and then the other will result as a matter of course with some more effort. I have already, Oh Rāma, informed you of one's inability to reach that state, so long as one confines himself to the contemplation of visible things. At no time or place will the cognition of the Real take place through the mental perception of objects alone. If, through proper efforts, you destroy the idea of dual Vāsanā-s, then the fell mental disease and other pain will vanish. Even with strenuous efforts,

it is difficult to destroy Vāsanā-s. One has to cope with more difficulty in eradicating the ever-growing Vāsanā-s than in razing Mahāmeru to its root. So long as the mind is not destroyed, the Vāsanā-s are not destroyed; so long as the Vāsanā-s are not destroyed, the mind is not destroyed. They are like seed and sprout. So long as Tattva-jñāna is not attained, the mind is not destroyed. Conversely, so long as the mind is not destroyed, Tattva-jñāna cannot be reached. Again, so long as the base Vāsanā-s are not destroyed, Jñāna is not attained; so long as Jñāna is not attained, the Vāsanā-s will not be destroyed. Therefore these three, the dawning of Tattva-jñāna, the annihilation of the mind and the extinction of the Vāsanā-s, are mutually dependent, and depend upon no other cause than themselves. But if through the firm efforts of a Yogin of discrimination walking on this path, the illusion of enjoyments arising out of the five senses be kept at bay, all the above three will be developed. So long as the three are not developed, the Reality will not be reached, even after the lapse of myriads of years. With the cultivation of these three equally for a long time, good results will accrue; but if they should be developed separately one by one, no stability in any one of them will result. In the former case, the three will destroy the bondage of the mind.

Like the straight, thin filament of a lotus stalk which is not sundered even though the stalk is broken, the Vāsanā-s which have been clinging to us for a long

time are not and will not be destroyed except through long-continued practice of Dhyāna (meditation). The wise say that the control of Prāṇa is tantamount to (or leads to) abandonment of the external Vāsanā-s. Therefore, serious endeavours should be made in this direction also. With the giving up of Vāsanā-s, the mind ceases to exist; the same result accrues with the control of Prāṇa. Hence follow that course which commends itself to your reason. Through initiation from a Guru, Āsana (posture), diet and Dhyāna (meditation), Prāṇa is controlled. But the Vāsanā-s are extinguished by the performance of actions without any attraction (or desire), the non-contemplation of Saṃsāra (or the absence of love for this mundane life) and the seeing of all things of form as formless. If there is an end to the life of our antagonists, the Vāsanā-s, the mind too will not exist. If the winds cease to blow, will particles of dust be seen floating in the atmosphere? The fluctuation of Prāṇa is that of the painful mind. Therefore the control of Prāṇa should be the natural and unfailing duty of all spiritually-minded persons.

Without resorting to proper means, the mind can never be controlled. Can a ferocious, rutting elephant be mastered otherwise than with a sharp-pointed goad? The four means for controlling the mind are (1) cognition of the one Jñāna, (2) association with the wise, (3) renunciation of Vāsanā-s, and (4) control of Prāṇa. The subjection of the mind by the above four means may be compared to the subsidence of dust when showers are rained down on the earth by clouds. Persons who resort to other

means than these to control the mind are like those who, having turned their face from the light, try to dispel darkness by darkness itself. Those who try to control the mind by a force other than the above-mentioned means resemble men who endeavour to bind a rutting elephant with the filament of a lotus stalk. The mind of the ignorant will ever be timid with pain and will never believe in anything, like a shy stag when brought amidst a concourse of people in town. The vain waste their time, like brutes, in the fruitless illusions of Tapas, Yajña, holy waters, the visiting of sacred shrines, the worship of gods, gifts, etc. But you should abandon all these as tending to rebirth, and holding fast to the one immaculate Brahma-jñāna, destroy all desire. Oh Rāma, after experiencing the one Jñāna state without Saṃkalpa and free from perceived things, may you rest in your heart without bondage-giving thoughts! Though engaged in actions, may you always shine in the Brahmic state of non-actor, wherein is the wealth which is the common property of all mankind!

Those flawless persons who are able to destroy their mind through inquiry can be stated to have truly realized the fruits of rebirth. Though slight, this mind rears up its thousand-headed hood and thinks in diverse ways. But the tree of right inquiry roots itself so firmly in this earth that no whirlwind of thoughts will ever be able to shake it from its stable position. It is said by the great ones that those who perform, like brutes, the actions of walking and standing, eating and

sleeping, etc. without devoting their minds to any (spiritual) inquiry are mere carcasses. Through the indestructible Jñāna vision, you should either by yourself, or with the aid of the exalted Ones be ceaselessly engaged in the pursuit of the inquiry: 'Who am I?' and 'What is this universe?' It is this true inquiry alone that generates Jñāna on the path of Adhyātma science which concerns itself with the discovery of truth without any doubt. Through right inquiry, the object of inquiry can be found like cream in milk. One who has equality of vision will wear it as his foremost ornament; he will never degrade himself from that state; he will be able to absorb all things, like a swan taking pure milk whether such things are polluted or mixed with poison or are injurious to health or adulterated. Whether they swallow virulent poison or counter-poison, or milk or sugarcane juice, or food, they preserve perfect equanimity of mind. Whether some one points his dagger at them or protects them, they regard him neither as foe nor friend. Since persons of equal vision look upon all equally, their heart is filled with bliss. The wise always stop their mind, by their intelligence, from entering the visible, filled with the illusion of the inert senses. The ignorant who have not known their own self which is of the nature of Jñāna, free of dependency of heart, are preyed upon by their senses, like grass nibbled by a herd of deer.

Through Saṅga (association or attraction of the mind), material objects are caused; through it, all

accidents take place; through it all desires arise; through it, this mundane existence is. Therefore it is that renunciation of Saṅga is said to be Mokṣa. Through its destruction, all rebirth ceases. Having destroyed the association of the mind with objects, may you, Oh Rāma, attain the Jīvan-mukti state!

Here Rāma questioned Vasiṣṭha thus: Oh Muni, who art like the hot wind meeting the snow of doubts, what is meant by Saṅga?

To which the Muni replied: Saṅga is the impure Vāsanā-s of attachment or hatred entertained (by the mind) towards the diverse objects of the world. To the Śarīrin (ego) of a Jīvan-mukta, the pure Vāsanā-s, which annihilate all pleasure and pain without any rebirth, will cling firmly. But in the case of Ajñānin-s, who are not Jīvan-mukta-s, the impure Vāsanā-s imply Saṅga. If you remain unaffected by joy, envy or sorrow, you can be said to have relinquished all Saṅga without desire, fear or anger. Without rejoicing in joy and pining under pain, if you do not subject yourself to the trammels of desire, then you can be said to have rid yourself of Saṅga. Being indifferent to pleasure and pain, if you are content with whatever you have, then you can be said to have cast off all Saṅga. With equal vision over all and Sattva-guṇa in your heart, if you perform actions, renouncing all visible things, then you will attain Brahmic bliss, Oh Raghunātha (Rāma).

VI. NIRVĀṆA PRAKARAṆA

1. THE STORY OF BHUŚUNḌA

Summary—Having traced in the previous Prakaraṇa everything from Saṃsāra up to Turyātīta at the end of Sattā-sāmānya and having also spoken of quiescence of the mind and thereby of the whole universe, the author describes in this Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa the means of directly cognizing that Turyātīta state. In this story of Bhuśunḍa, the Yogic mysteries to attain that end are revealed.

Vasiṣṭha again continued: As the quarters and time do not exist, the immutable and non-dual Brahman alone shines as Absolute Consciousness without any environment and without any change, destruction, beginning or end; nought else exists. With this thought in your mind, you should refrain from identifying yourself with objects; and having become a Jivan-mukta, may you reach the non-dual, quiescent silence and enjoy the final beatitude. So long as the idea of Ajñāna exists, the Brahmic state will not be attained. So long as there is the sense of enjoying the legerdemain of this world, the false creations of the mind, etc. will not wear off. In fact, neither Citta nor Māyā nor Manas nor Jīva exists; the effulgent Brahman alone

is, like one vast ocean, ebbing and falling. As long as this 'I', which identifies itself with the body of nine avenues, conceives as real the visible things of this universe, so long will the illusions of Citta, etc. exist. As long as there is desire for objects with the idea, 'They are mine, etc.', so long will the illusions of Citta, etc. exist. If, Oh cloud-coloured Rāma, through the stainless, internal 'That', the straw which are the three worlds be sacrificed in the fire of Jñāna, then the illusions of Citta, etc. will never exist. Those who, contemplating the all-pervading Self which is the Jñāna without limit and without Saṃkalpa-s, regard as friends, without any duplicity of mind, even those who are hired as assassins to kill them—those only can be said to have truly worshipped their immaculate Ātman. Like a cataract which washes away the trees on its banks, those who have destroyed material desires and the injurious ill-will of the mind have purged themselves of all impurities with true glory of heart. Those who have contemplated internally the true meaning of Tattva-jñāna Śāstra-s and with discrimination have put an end to all desire, are like the sun that dispels darkness. Those who have known the true express meaning of the Veda-s will find it clearly impressed in their mind like water in a burnt ground. Those who, despite incessant practice, have not cognized the Brahmic Principle, those who have not seen directly with the eye of Jñāna, will ever be tossed about by mental modifications, like a withered leaf. Even though Jñāna is imperishable, people do not try to

know it and hence droop in heart. All the threats and fulminations of the ignorant ring of their destruction in our ears, like arrows hissing on the battlefield when released from bows. These worthless persons but loiter on the way, in not cognizing the imperishable Jñāna.

To the ignorant, the express significance of the Veda-s is like a thing sunk in mire; it is like the howling of a dog whose eye is cast up to the heavens. Ajñāna is the cause of all dangers; but no dangers befall a knower of truth. Māyā is the necessary attendant of the ignorant. This universe is, to the mind of a Jñānin, insignificant like the footprints of a cow; but to the Ajñānin-s, it is an ocean of pain.

Nought is but the one Saccidānanda Reality which is illimitable, unperceived by the senses, quiescent, the all, and beyond thought. Out of this Saccidānanda, which is the witness of all, an intelligence arose, and being subject to change, created the three states, subtle, middling and gross, through the three Guṇa-s, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These three kinds of Avidyā generate rebirth for all Jīva-s. It is the destruction of this Avidyā that is the Brahmic state. The Guṇa-s of this Avidyā are known as Prakṛti. These three can be made into nine through the triune division of each. Under the heading of Sattva in the original Avidyā are classed Ṛṣi-s, Muni-s, Siddha-s, Nāga-s, Vidyādhara-s, Deva-s and the virtuous Jīva-s. Vidyādhara-s and Nāga-s come under the Tāmasic aspect of the above-mentioned Sattva; Muni-s and Siddha-s under the Rājasic aspect of the same; the

Deva-s, Jīva-s and others under the Sāttvic aspect of Sattva. Out of this Avidyā, came Vidyā. This Vidyā is no other than the pure Sattva of Avidyā. Again, it is stated that Rajas and Tamas have each their three divisions. The excessive Tāmasic intelligence has the Ajñāna body of trees, etc.

Here, on being questioned by Rāma as to how intelligence came to be embodied in trees and plants and so subject to the trammels of excessive Ajñāna, Vasiṣṭha replied: The intelligence in plants is in that state when it is not entirely without Manas (like stones) nor with Manas, thus occupying the intermediate state between Sat and Asat.

Again Rāma, with an eager desire to know, questioned the Muni lovingly: Why not consider the state of the trees and plants in the universe as Mokṣa itself, inasmuch as the intelligence in that state is in harmony with Sattā (beness)?

Vasiṣṭha replied: The attainment of the state of Sattā, common to all mankind, after a discriminative inquiry between the real and the unreal constitutes the supreme Mokṣa. If, after having clearly and completely experienced and renounced all Vāsanā-s of objects, one reaches the Sattā-sāmānya state, then it is Mokṣa. Like the sprout in the seed, the Vāsanā-s are dull in the heart within. This is Suṣupti and this is what generates rebirth. It is only because all the Vāsanā-s are latent in the heart, after the innumerable worldly thoughts (of the waking state) are extinct, that the dire pain of Saṃsāra arises. Trees, etc. are merely

inert. Though going into Suṣupti, they are again and again born. Like flowers latent in seeds and pots in earth, the unceasing Vāsanā-s are potential in the tree. Therefore this Suṣupti which is the seed of the all-expansive Vāsanā-s cannot be called Mokṣa; but the pure Vāsanā-s which are not the seed of that state are themselves Turya and hence it is Mokṣa. It is not necessary to have much to do with the enemy in the form of the impure Vāsanā-s, debts, disease, poison, anger or attachment; even slight association with any of them is enough to afflict us all our life.

Persons who have burnt up Ajñāna, the seed of impure Vāsanā-s, and have reached the Sattā-sāmānya state will never suffer from pain, whether embodied or disembodied. The Cit-śakti is of the nature of Vāsanā-s and their seed Ajñāna. Sleep alone is to us the characteristic of the Cit-śakti. Persons well versed in all departments of knowledge state that non-cognition of this eternal Jñāna is Avidyā. Having burnt up Rajas and Tamas completely through the primeval Sattva and Avidyā, may you become the non-dual. The conviction that the Supreme Brahman is not the universe is itself Avidyā; and the certitude that Brahman alone is this universe, is emancipation, devoid of Avidyā. May you be blessed with that certitude of conviction which is to be found in the pure minds of Śiva and other Deva-s as well as of Nārada and other Ṛṣi-s.

At this point of the narrative, Rāma asked: Please describe to me the painless state of Śaṃkara (Śiva)

and others. To which the Muni replied: All the manifold things of the cosmos, whether great or small, are the stainless Brahman only; Jñāna is Brahman; the world is Brahman; the five elements are Brahman; we are Brahman; our enemies are Brahman; our friends and kinsmen are Brahman. Just as this universe appears dark to the blind, and bright to those who have eyes to see, so it appears blissful to Jñānin-s and painful to the Ajñānin-s. Whosoever contemplates all as the partless Brahman, he alone is Brahman; he alone is the partaker of ambrosia. He will never fail to attain immortality.

The Self-Light alone is immaculate. The consciousness of all is everywhere. The quiescent Jñāna is Brahman; this will become an object of direct perception. When a person sees a stranger without noticing him in his mind, the knowledge which exists then might be stated to be the all-pervading Jñāna of Brahman which is no other than 'we'. Let us eulogize that non-dual Jñānātman which yields us the fruit of all Saṃkalpa-s, which is the Light of lights and which is devoid of all Guṇa-s. Let us offer our salutations to that Jñānātman which is devoid of all Saṃkalpa-s, pleasures or beginnings. Those who have this certainty of conviction with no thoughts and who act according to truth alone, will enjoy final beatitude in the Brahmic state replete with truth, quiescence and equality. Those persons who, being filled with the fullness of Jñāna, have equal vision over all and are free from desire, never thirst for anything, whether living or dying.

At this stage Rāma interrupted the Muni: Please explain fully the two paths of true Jñāna and control of Prāṇa by which Jīvan-mukta-s are able to give up all Vāsanā-s and pain.

To which the Muni replied: There are two means of Yoga to avert the dire pain of existence. The two means, namely true Jñāna and control of Prāṇa should, rightly speaking, be classed under Yoga; yet in ordinary usage, the control of Prāṇa alone is called Yoga. Both these paths have been explained by Parameśvara. To the temperament of some, Yoga is most desirable; to the temperament of others, Jñāna is most desirable. Of these two, I have already expatiated upon the true Jñāna. Now I shall deal with Yoga. To illustrate it, I shall relate to you a wonderful story. Once upon a time, I was in the august synod of Devendra along with Devaṛṣi-s and others. There I heard, from the lips of Nārada and other Muni-s, the stories of Cīraṃjīvin-s (the long-lived). Please listen to one of them. A nest big as a mountain was built on the southern branch of a Kalpa tree which raised its head aloft on the north-eastern side of the summit of Mahāmeru, dazzling like a diamond. In that nest lived a crow named Bhuṣuṇḍa, a Yogin. Who in all the world could, either before or after this Yogin, vie with him in the length of time a Yogin can sit in Yoga? This Bhuṣuṇḍa was the longest lived among them and desireless; he had the wealth of Mokṣa, the greatest intelligence, extreme quiescence and the faculty of a seer of cognizing clearly the three periods of time.

When all in the celestial assembly had heard this story of Bhuṣuṇḍa, as related by Śātātapa Muni, I was filled with intense desire to go and see him in person. Accordingly, I went and observed Bhuṣuṇḍa on a fragrant Kalpa tree on the top of Meru. On its slopes and caves and on plants filled with flowers as well as on the branches of trees were seated large birds. The young of the moon-coloured swans, the vehicle of Brahmā, chanted the *Sāmaveda* and other Mantra-s with the sound ' Svāhā '. I saw there cuckoos, parrots and other birds as well as many peacocks which develop Śiva-jñāna¹ through Skanda. The moment I appeared before Bhuṣuṇḍa, who was amidst a crowd of crows and Atlantean in form, of tall stature, with full mind, observing silence, without the fluctuation of Prāṇa and enjoying bliss in his own self, he came to meet me half way and, overjoyed at recognizing me as Vasiṣṭha, poured forth kind words. Then welcoming me with flowers generated through Saṃkalpa, he pointed to a seat nearby. After I was seated, he kindly received me with *arghya*,² etc. and gave expression to the following sweet words: ' My companions and I are exhilarated by the nectar-like shower of thy visit. Thou hast afflicted thy body with long travel. By the touch of thy revered feet, I have known all. All the great ones have thought of the longest-lived

¹ Śiva-jñāna is the knowledge of Śiva, taught here by one of his sons, Skanda.

² *Arghya*—water offered while receiving someone.

and hence of me too. Thou hast come here on that errand only. I wish to drink the nectar of thy words.'

Thereupon I addressed him thus: 'King of birds, truly hast thou spoken. I came here to visit thy gracious self who hast been deathless since a very long time. To what race dost thou trace thy lineage? How didst thou attain Tattva-jñāna? What is the duration of thy present life? What hast thou learned of nature's laws? Through whose unlimited wisdom hast thou been here? Please answer them all in such a manner that I may understand little by little.'

The virtuous Bhuṣuṇḍa said: 'In the beautiful presence of the supreme Śiva are myriads of Gaṇa-s (hosts) who are elephant-faced, sheep-faced, camel-faced, bear-faced, etc. Some of them have hoofs on their heads or hands; some of them have their faces in their abdomen. Many are the vagaries of nature that could be witnessed there. These Bhūta-gaṇa-s (or elementals) encircle Śiva on the Kailāsa hills, while the Śakti-s¹ dance before him, having their abode on the tops of mountains, Ākāśa, earth, forests, cremation grounds and bodies. These Śakti-s are, according to their different degrees, named Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī, Aparājitā, Siddhā, Raktā, Alambuṣā and Utpalā. Of these, Alambuṣā has a Vāhana (vehicle) by the name

¹ These Śakti-s or potencies are said to be the feminine or passive powers of the universe.

of Caṇḍa, a crow. Once upon a time, according to the mandates of Śiva, their chief, all the Śakti-s who had developed the wealth of the eight major Siddhi-s congregated together and celebrated a grand festival in the Ākāśa when they danced and carolled, laughed and reeled under excessive intoxication. Meanwhile in another part of the sky in the same tipsy state was Caṇḍa disporting himself with the female swans—the vehicles of the other Śakti-s—who uniting with the above-mentioned beautiful crow, became pregnant thereby. While the swans were thus jubilant, the Śakti-s of Parameśvara put an end to their dance and song and retired to their respective places. Then these pregnant swans of the Śakti-s narrated truly the incidents connected with their conception to their respective heads, who were without Saṃkalpa.

‘Thereupon the Śakti-s said: “You have conceived through sheer destiny. You will no longer be able to pull our Ratha (car or body). Therefore live according to your free will and pleasure.” With these words, the Devī-s went into Nirvikalpa Samādhī.

‘The swans became far advanced in pregnancy and at the allotted time laid eggs on the shore of the Mānasa¹ lake. These eggs being hatched, there issued twenty-one young ones, the progeny of Caṇḍa. I with twenty others, along with our parents, were engaged

¹ Allegorically the Mānasa lake represents the seat of Manas, wherein the egg was laid to generate the universe.

for a long time in the worship of Brahma-śakti (namely Alambuṣā). She arose from her Samādhi and graced us with Mokṣa, through her love. Extreme quiescence reigned in our hearts thereafter. In order to choose a place where we could live alone and without association, we reached our parents by the side of Alambuṣā and having saluted them both, we reached Mokṣa through the grace of that Śakti. On inquiring about a place where Nirvāṇic bliss can be enjoyed, we were directed to this Kalpa tree. Having poured forth our thanks, we came to abide here without any pain. All the Karman-s I have been performing from that date have now materialized themselves in thy shape and have fructified today. Who will not be blessed with the nectar of Brahmic bliss under the moonlight of association with Jñānin-s? Will the certitude of the beneficial nature of a thing arise otherwise than through the grace of the wise? Even though I am a knower of Brahman, as I have rid myself quickly of all existences through thy visit, this birth of mine is fraught with the most wonderful of results. Therefore thou art Īśvara himself.' So saying he paid further respects to me.

Then I inquired of him as to how he separated himself from his brothers. To which Bhuṣuṇḍa replied: 'In this spot, we lived for many Yuga-s, nay for many Kalpa-s. At last, my brothers, disregarding the body as a mere trifle, gave it up for Mokṣa. Though blessed with longevity, glory and power, they perished (or disappeared) through their own Saṃkalpa.

I asked him: 'How will you survive the terrible Pralaya when fierce gales play havoc and the twelve Āditya-s (suns) burn up the whole universe?'

Bhuṣuṇḍa answered: 'Do you think nature's action will ever cease to be? At the time of Pralaya, I will quit this nest of mine. When the twelve Āditya-s scorch the world with their burning rays, I shall, through the Ap (water) Dhāraṇā,¹ reach the Ākāśa. When the fierce gales arise splintering rocks to pieces, I shall be in the Ākāśa through the Dhāraṇā of Agni. When the world together with Mahāmeru is under water, I shall float on them without disturbance through Vāyu Dhāraṇā. When the time of universal destruction arrives, I shall be, as in Susupti, in the Brahmic state, the end of all mundane eggs, till the beginning of another creation of Brahmā. After his creation, I shall again resort to this nest for my abode. Through my Saṃkalpa, the Kalpa tree at the summit of this mountain will arise every Kalpa in a manner similar to this.' Here I interrupted him: 'Thou wert able to live long through the performance of Dhāraṇā. But why did all the other Yogin-s die or disappear?'

Bhuṣuṇḍa replied: 'Who will be able to overstep the strict ordinances of Parameśvara? His will is that I should act thus and the other Yogin-s should act in the way they did. As every pre-ordained event should

¹ In Yoga, it is stated, there exist different kinds of Dhāraṇā-s—of water, fire, etc.—through which the Yogin-s render themselves proof against the respective elements they wish to master.

work out its results, they will inevitably come to pass. Such is the unerring nature of this law.'

I questioned him thus: 'As thou who art well versed in the Jñāna of Brahman and the Śāstra-s and art also acquainted with the marvels of the three worlds through thy Yogic power, please inform me of all that came under thy vision.'

The Yogin replied: 'There was a time when for 11,000 years this earth was one nebulous mass of dust filled with stones, without mountains, trees or grass appearing on it for a long time. One Catur-yuga (four Yuga-s), this earth was a vast forest. In another Catur-yuga, it was one chain of mountains without any level land to separate it. In another Catur-yuga, the whole earth was overspread with the Vindhya hills without Ṛṣi Agastya. In one creation, Brahmins became crafty and full of desire, while Śūdra-s slighted them. Women who were chaste acted as they liked. Oh Muni Vasiṣṭha, I saw these and some other things too which I shall presently relate. I have observed with my own eyes the origin of the sun, etc., the state of Indra and Upendra, the Varāha (boar) Avatāra of Viṣṇu who recovered back the earth which Hiranyākṣa stole, the consolidation into one of the Veda-s which were scattered in pieces in different directions and the churning of nectar in the milky ocean with the Mandara hill as rod. Even some of my juniors may be able to relate this to thee. But thou shouldst know that endless have been the Avatāra-s, Nārada-s, Bhara-dvāja-s, Marīci-s, Pulastya-s, the elephant-headed

Vināyaka-s,¹ Kārttikeya-s, etc. Therefore it is impossible to enumerate the number of those who came into existence in creation up to now. Oh Vasiṣṭha of great veracity, this is the eighth of thy births (as Vasiṣṭha). This is the eighth time we have met together thus. Thou wert born once in the Ākāśa; another time in water; another time on a mountain surrounded by groves; another time out of the red flames. In five creations has the earth disappeared and been recovered by Viṣṇu in his Kūrma (tortoise) Avatāra. Twelve times has the ocean of milk been churned. Of all these I was a direct witness. Thrice has Hiraṇyākṣa² taken away the earth to Pātāla. Six times has Viṣṇu incarnated as Paraśurāma, the son of Reṇukā. Buddha has incarnated again and again in a hundred Kaliyuga-s. The Tripura³ and its denizens have been thirty times consumed by flames. Dakṣa,⁴ the Prajāpati, lost his Yajña (sacrifice) twice. Ten times has Śakra (Indra) been defeated by the one who wears the moon on his head (i.e. Śiva). Eight times have I seen the dreadful conflicts that raged between Īśvara (Śiva) and

¹ Vināyaka is Gaṇeśa, the son of Śiva, as is Kārttikeya. The passage shows that these names of Ṛṣi-s are titular only.

² Hiraṇyākṣa is the Asura who stole the earth to Pātāla from where it was recovered by Viṣṇu in his Varāha (boar) Avatāra.

³ This refers to the burning of Tripura or the three cities, golden, silver and iron, governed by Tāraka, Vidyumnālin and Kamalākṣa.

⁴ This refers to Dakṣa's Yajña when his son-in-law (Śiva) wroth at the treatment accorded to his wife, sent Virabhadra who decapitated Dakṣa and substituted a ram's head.

Arjuna¹ on account of a hog. The eternal Veda-s will arise suited to the intelligence of every age. They will be understood more and more with the increase of intelligence. Similarly are worldly actions marvellous. Though the several Purāṇa-s are read in different ways, yet they convey the same truth. Every Yuga, Jñāna-śāstra-s will be embodied in the shape of the stainless *Rāmāyaṇa*. Like Ṛṣi Vālmīki who recited the *Rāmāyaṇa* now, there have been twelve Vālmīki-s who brought out the same before. *Bhārata*, the second of the Itihāsa-s, though composed by the noble Vyāsa, is considered by some as a Khila (supplement to the Veda-s). In this creation, Śrī Rāma incarnated for the eleventh time on this earth. He will incarnate again in the wealthy house of Vāsudeva. All these illusions of the world will at one time manifest themselves and at another time not. All these illusory visible things are latent in the one Jñānātman, like foam in an ocean and will again revive and again perish. All the eight quarters, mountains, the sun, the moon, the stars, the seat of Meru, etc. differ with every fresh creation. All these have fallen under my direct ken. Each of these four Yuga-s has its own peculiarities of Dharma-s (duties), etc.’

Here Vasiṣṭha interposed: ‘How didst thou manage to get out of the clutches of Yama (Death), engaged as thou wert in worldly actions?’

¹ The fight between Arjuna and Śiva as a hunter is recorded in the *Mahābhārata*.

The Yogin said: 'What good results will accrue to those who will not act upon the injunction of the Great Ones? Though thou knowest this, I shall explain it to thee, inasmuch as thou hast asked of me. Yama will not approach those whose minds have cast off the pearls of sin strung on the string of pain. Yama will not approach those whose minds are never subject to the agonies which are like a saw to the tree of certitude or vermin to the body. Yama will not approach those wise persons who do not nourish in themselves the hissing serpent of desire with its hood of anxiety, which twines itself round the tree of the perishable body. Yama will not approach those Jñānin-s who are not bitten by the serpent of greed living in the hole which is their mind, emitting the venom of attachment and hatred. Yama will not approach those persons who are not burnt up by anger which is like the Vāḍava fire in the ocean of the body making the waters of discrimination dry up. Yama will not approach those whose minds are not afflicted by Kāma (passion), like sesame seeds crushed by a hard oil-press. Yama will not approach those who attain quiescence in the imperishable and immaculate Nirvāṇic state, without any pain, through deep meditation. It is the above-mentioned sins that are the germs causing the malady of existence. They will not affect those great minds that have become non-dual and without any differences (of conception). Pain which arises through mental disease and produces every illusion will not touch that non-dual mind divested of all differences,

wherein the heart-Ākāśa is not obscured and attachment and hatred are destroyed. It will not enter that non-dual mind which is free from bad thoughts, words, qualities or actions and which ever looks equally upon all.

‘The mind should be rendered fit for liberation to reach the state of “That”, without delusion, limitation or stains. It should be made to reach the state of “That” wherein the ghosts of impure differentiations do not reside, having previously been stripped of fear, its long-standing associate. When Ātman is known through it, all pain will be annihilated; and then there will be no compeer to it in all the realms. It is difficult of attainment even to such as myself. Such a subjugation of the mind enables one to reach a goal far above all actions. How can such a state be attained by an intelligence steeped in ignorance? Oh Sage, I have been engaged in meditation on Prāṇa which destroys all pleasure and pain and conduces to bliss, and which is one among the different forms of meditation on the self. It is the control of Prāṇa which paves the way for the non-cognition of external things and is the cause of the arrest of death.’

Here Vasiṣṭha, though familiar with the control of Prāṇa, asked him what he meant. To which the Yogin replied: ‘In the cool lotus of the heart within this visible tenement of flesh composed of the five elements, there are two Vāyu-s, Prāṇa and Apāna, mingled in it. Those who tread smoothly and without the slightest

effort the path of these two Vāyu-s, will become the sun and the moon of the heart-Ākāśa and will rove in the Ākāśa and yet be animating and carrying their fleshly tabernacle. These Vāyu-s go up and down to higher and lower states. They have the same nature in the waking, dreaming and dreamless sleeping states, and permeate all. I am moving in the direction of these two Vāyu-s and have destroyed all my Vāsanā-s (in the waking state), like those of the dreamless, sleeping state. Divide a filament of the lotus stalk a thousand times and you will find these Vāyu-s more subtle than that. Hence it is difficult for me to treat of the nature of these Vāyu-s (and their vibrations). Of these, Prāṇa ceaselessly vibrates in this body with an upward motion, both externally and internally, while Apāna, having the same fluctuating tendency, vibrates both external and internal to the body, having a downward motion. It is beneficial if the Prāṇa exhaled (to the extent of sixteen digits) is inhaled to the same extent.¹ Those who have brought to experience this (i.e. the equalization of Prāṇa in exhalation and inhalation) will enjoy infinite bliss.

‘ Now hear about the characteristics of Prāṇa-s. The inhalation, to the length of twelve digits of the Prāṇa which has been exhaled is called (the internal) Pūraka (inhalation). It is also called the (internal) Pūraka, when Apāna Vāyu re-enters the body from outside without any effort. When Apāna Vāyu ceases

¹ Only twelve digits are inhaled.

to manifest itself and Prāṇa is absorbed in the heart, then the time occupied in such a state is (the internal) Kumbhaka (cessation of breath). Oh Rāma, versed in all Veda-s, Yogin-s are able to experience all these. When the Prāṇa in the Ākāśa of the heart manifests itself externally (to the heart within) in diverse aspect without any affliction to the mind, then it is called (the internal) Recaka (exhalation). When the externally fluctuating Prāṇa enters the nose and stops there at its tip, then it is called the external Pūraka; but if passing from the tip of the nose, it goes down twelve digits, then it is also called the external Pūraka. When Prāṇa is arrested without and Apāna within, then it is called the external Kumbhaka. When the shining Apāna-vāyu takes an upward bend within, then it is styled the external Recaka. All these practices lead to Mokṣa. Therefore they should be meditated upon. Those who have understood and practised well all the external and internal Kumbhaka-s, etc. will never after be reborn.

‘All the eight courses I have described are capable of achieving Mokṣa. They should be sought after by day and by night. Those who are practising these and control their minds by not letting them run in other directions will, in course of time, reach Nirvāṇa. Such persons will never thirst after material pleasures, like Brahmins who will not defile their hands by the touch of a dog’s skin. They will ever uniformly practise these whether walking or standing, waking or dreaming. They will never be afflicted by

bondage or pain. They will obtain all legitimate, longed-for results. Prāṇa, having flown out, will again be absorbed in the heart having run back twelve digits. Similarly, Apāna will be absorbed in the heart, having issued out of the heart and running back twelve digits to it. Apāna, being the moon, will cool the whole body in its passage. But Prāṇa, being the sun, will generate heat in the system and cook (or digest) everything in it. Will pain arise in one who has reached that supreme state when the Kalā-s (rays) of Apāna, the moon, are drowned by Prāṇa, the sun? Will rebirth be the lot of one who has reached that powerful state when the Kalā-s of Prāṇa, the sun, are devoured by Apāna, the moon? Those will be free of rebirths who reach that neutral state in which they find Apāna-vāyu consumed by Prāṇa and vice versa. I eulogize that Cidātman who is in that intermediate state when Prāṇa and Apāna are absorbed in one another. I meditate ceaselessly on that Cidātman who is in the Ākāśa directly in front of the tip of my nose, when Prāṇa and Apāna become both extinct. Thus I attained the supreme state, worshipped by Deva-s, through my faultless vision. Thus it is, through this path of Prāṇa's control, that I attained the supreme and immaculate Tattva devoid of pain. With this vision in me, I never look back (with any remorse) upon the past or into the future. I concern myself with the present only. And the result has been that I have reached this imperishable state. Never will I contemplate this or that,

as my goal. Through such a course have I been able to live from age to age without any care. In the company of happy persons, I will be happy; in the company of the afflicted, I am also afflicted. As I am the friend of the whole universe, I have been able to live long and happily without any pain. I never gloat amidst excessive prosperity nor languish in dire adversity. I would be the universal benefactor. My longevity is due to the absence of Ahaṃkāra in me, Oh Lord of Muni-s. Moreover it is due to thy grace that I have been blessed with much Tattva-jñāna and long life.'

Thus did Bhuṣuṇḍa end, when Vasiṣṭha addressed him thus: 'That which you have deigned to relate to me is marvellous. It has enchanted my ears and captivated my heart. Who, on lending his ears to it, will not be in raptures? May you prosper gloriously. As the sun is about to reach the meridian, I shall wend my way to Devaloka. May prosperity be with you.'

So saying I rose and steered my way in the Ākāśa. In spite of all my entreaties to him to stay where he was, he accompanied me many Yojanā-s. Then I compelled him to return.

Is it not heart-rending, Oh Rāma, to part from pure Jñānin-s? I parted from Bhuṣuṇḍa, the great Yogin once in Kṛta-yuga. Then I visited him again in this Tretā-yuga, when, Rāma, thou didst incarnate.

Therefore thou shouldst know that this is the path of Bhuṣuṇḍa, the great Yogin.

2. THE STORY OF DEVA-PŪJĀ (WORSHIP OF GOD)

Summary—Having, in the previous story, stated that Nirvāṇic bliss, wherein all are Brahman, arises through Jñāna and Yoga, the author enunciates the rationale of the worship of God performed by Hindus.

All these things composed of the five elements are of the nature of appearance only. So also is time which is known through right discrimination. Moreover, it is false to identify the 'I' with this body to which the terms 'I', 'he', etc. are applied. Therefore may you free yourself from the illusory conception that this body composed of a network of bones, muscles, etc. is the 'I'. Is there any limit to the myriads of forms created by Saṃkalpa? Oh Rāghava, sleeping on cushioned beds at home, you roamed about in all directions in a dream body. How real is it? Where is the body which can be called yours? Please reflect upon this. When let loose in the waking state, the mind wanders about in diverse places such as Mahāmeru or Devaloka and is lost in a labyrinth. Where has the body which can be called yours taken its refuge? Know this Saṃsāra to be a long dream or a mental creation or delusion. This universe, which is but a manifestation, neither is nor is not. Tattva-jñānin-s say that the annihilation of differentiated thought leads to the worship of the All-beneficent.

It is certain that all of us are destined to die. Therefore why should people in this world weep over the death of a person? Oh valiant Rāma, persons

born in this world enjoy only a tittle of happiness. Therefore why should Ahaṃkāra be manifested in actions which bring only a tinge of bliss? Having given up all conceptions of duality, may you look equally upon all in this reflection of a universe. It is nothing but a blot on the glass of the mind. Whoever renders his mind free of diversities and delusions and does not allow ingress to the serpents of attachment and hatred into his mind, will be like a Kalpa tree which yields everything. Oh intelligent Rāma, erudite persons who are self-presumptuous through their ability to solve doubts are like the ass carrying a heavy burden and not worthy of being approached, since they are not devoid of attachment and hatred.

Should the axle, called Saṃkalpa, of the car of existence, having the wheels of illusory rebirth, be stopped completely, then the car will come to a total halt; but if the axle of Saṃkalpa be even a little in motion, then even the mighty will not be able to arrest the car. Such stoppage should be made through the power of Jñāna, subtle intellect and self-effort. The whole universe contains nothing which cannot be accomplished by true Jñāna, the qualities of the wise and a study of Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s. The mischievous and powerful imp of a lower mind is the generator of all pain and fear, and the destroyer of spiritual wealth. Having slain this slayer, may you become 'That' which you are. Should this imp of a mind take firm possession of a person, any amount of study will not exorcise it. Even Ācārya-s find it difficult to scare it

away. But if this evil spirit be divorced from one without even the shadow of thought, then will the Śāstra-s, etc. be of help to lift him out of rebirth, like a beast that, falling into a shallow pool without mire, can be easily lifted up. If, after freeing oneself from all objects of enjoyment as well as of the enjoyment itself, one wishes to attain the non-dual and all-full Ātmic Reality through the grace of the Guru and his own discriminative inquiry, then he should hear what passed between me and Parameśvara, wearing the moon on his matted locks.

Once upon a time, I spent a long time most instructively and delightfully on the Kailāsa hills in worshipping Parameśvara, performing Tapas in a raised shed on the banks of the Gaṅgā and in studying many books in the company of Siddha-s. One night on the eighth day of the first half of the lunar month of Siṃha (August-September), it was fifteen Ghaṭika-s (1½ o'clock), when bustle had ceased in all quarters and nature was hushed and, as it were, in a state of silent Samādhi. Not a single footstep was heard. The darkness was so dense as to be cloven by a sword. Mountain caves, forests, etc. melted into the void in the gloom. I then returned from Samādhi and let my mind rove amidst the heterogeneous objects of the universe. Then an incomparable light which I had never witnessed before flashed before me in that darkness. It was as if countless moons and pure white clouds contributed their mite to increase the dazzling splendour. In the light, I observed Parameśvara and

Pārvatī locked in each other's arms and preceded by Nandikeśvara.¹ Along with my disciples, I rose up and went to them with the requisite materials of worship. Standing at a distance, I eulogized them; and nearing them I worshipped Parameśvara whose mind is ever calm, and who has a merciful eye, free from pain, with prostrations, *arghya* (oblations of water, sweet, cool flowers) and other objects. Similarly I worshipped his consort, Parameśvarī, and prostrated myself before her. Then I paid lovingly my respects to Śiva's and Pārvatī's attendants. After which the resplendent Parameśvara, with significant words as delightful as the nectar-like moon, addressed me thus: 'Has thy intelligence merged itself in the Brahmic state and attained quiescence therein, free from all pain and full of bliss? Has thy Tapas been proceeding without any obstacles? Hast thou attained that which should be attained? Have all visible things parted from thy mind?'

So said the cause of all the worlds, when I prostrated before him and said: 'Oh Deva of Deva-s, there is nothing which is beyond the power of one who has obtained thy grace. Never will fear of objects touch him. Thy devotees are worshipped by all in the world. In whatever place live the great ones who have found an asylum in thee, that is the true residence, that is the true country and the true mountain for others to make their abode. Meditation on thee is but the result

¹ This term means the lord of bulls; this bull stands for *Pranava*.

of one's past virtuous Karman-s, and showers Dharma-s on one in his present life and is the seed of future Dharma-s. It is like a Pūrṇakumbha¹ for storing up Jñāna nectar or like a moon shedding its mild light. It is the path leading to Mokṣa. Having come into the possession of the Cintāmaṇi (gem) of thy meditation, I am now free of all unreal existence.

Having thus eulogized him, I again prostrated myself at the soft feet of Paramaśiva, the first cause, bright with mercy, and addressed him: 'Oh ocean of grace living on the Kailāsa hills! there is yet a doubt lingering in me who have understood all through thy grace. Please favour me with the truth concerning it. What is meant by Deva-pūjā (or the worship of God) which is said to destroy pain and confer bliss? And how should it be done?' To which the Lord replied: 'Deva (God) is neither the solitary Viṣṇu nor Śiva nor any other person having a body of five elements. Nor is it the mind. But it is the Jñāna, the Self without beginning or end. Can it be these paltry objects such as bodies, etc.? As Brahma-jñāna is the Jñāna which is illimitable, actionless, beginningless and endless, such a Jñāna alone is true and fit to be worshipped. But in the case of the ignorant, devoid of Jñāna (wisdom), worship of forms is ordained to be the best. Just as wayfarers when they are unable

¹ Pūrṇakumbha is a vessel filled with water and covered by a coconut, the water being consecrated by Mantra-s. Generally this is taken to be a mark of respect to receive the worthy.

to travel a long distance are told that their destination is but at calling distance in order not to let their spirits droop, so persons without Jñāna are told to worship diverse forms at first; but the wise say that they will not obtain the certitude of Jñāna through such a process. It is the beginningless and endless Jñānākāśa that pervades everywhere. As it is imperishable, outliving all Kalpa-s, it alone is God. The worship of it should be performed with the flowers of Jñāna (spiritual wisdom), equality of vision and contentment. Worship of particular forms is no worship at all. Through no other path can the partless Jñāna-bliss be realized. It is only through the sprinkling of the flowers of Jñāna (wisdom), etc. that the bliss will become replete. This illumined Jñāna is beyond the reach of the Śāstra-s. It is the Sattā-sāmānya which is common to, and occupies, the intermediate state between Sat and Asat in all internal thoughts. God is the great Sattā-mātra alone. Should this Jñāna subject itself to Vikalpa-s, then it abandons its real form and becomes individualized and separate. The one Cit (consciousness) contracts Saṃkalpa through contemplation, in regular succession, upon the different states of Avidyā (or matter). Then conditioned by space, time and other powers (and having conceptions of the same), it becomes the ignorant Jīva fulfilling the functions of Buddhi, Ahaṃkāra and Manas. With this Manas (mind), it longs for Saṃsāra, birth and death, and clings to them. With the thought of the environment of the body, it will be sunk in the mire of great

delusion. Excessive pain will make it go lower and lower into an endless trail. These will continue to afflict it so long as there is Saṃkalpa, not otherwise. Saṃkalpa itself is pain; its absence is Brahmic bliss. If through thy discrimination, thou dispellest the cloud of Saṃkalpa, then there will remain the stainless one like a permanent, pure, autumnal sky. Mayest thou live immersed in the ocean of Brahmic bliss in an illumined state, having destroyed the stains of Saṃkalpa-s through thy pure efforts.

‘Ātma-tattva has all Śakti-s (or potencies) in it. These Śakti-s, through their sportive act, generate bondage and emancipation. In Ātman which is the same in all and is the pure Jñāna and which yet generates all Vikalpa-s, there are numberless Śakti-s such as Icchā Śakti, Vyoman (Ākāśa) Śakti, Kāla (time) Śakti, Niyati (law) Śakti, Mahā Śakti, Jñāna Śakti, Kriyā (action) Śakti, Karṭṛ (agency) Śakti, Akarṭṛ (non-agency) Śakti, etc. The sportive Śakti of Ajñāna generates birth and death. But they are arrested through the Śakti called Nirodha (control). The annihilation of all Bhāvanā-s (thoughts) through the different kinds of Ārādhana (respect paid to or worship of God) constitutes the pure Pūjā. Non-identification of “I” with this body arising through Karman-s is the supreme Ārādhana. Through such contemplation should Ārādhana be made to it. It is the Jñāna-light compared to which even millions of suns appear as a speck. It is this light which all should reach, considering their “I” as no other than

•

this light. To this Jñāna-puruṣa, the highest Ākāśa is the head; the lowest Ākāśa forms his golden, lotus feet. The endless quarters are his hands. All the countless myriads of mundane eggs will be absorbed in a corner of his heart. The resplendent Paramākāśa is the beginningless and endless form of it. The immortal Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Devendra, etc. are like so many hairs on the body of this great Principle. Icchā and diverse other Śakti-s which start a creation, and are the motors in the mechanism of this universe, rest in his body. Those who realize that such is the nature of the Supreme One, fit for worship by all, will be of the nature of Jñāna and will be happy in Ātmic Reality. He lives everywhere; is the source of all states; he has time, which regulates all things in the world, as the porter at his gates; he is the immaculate Self-light. Enjoying at ease all objects of enjoyment through the five organs of sense and mind and contemplating within that all is Parameśvara who is above all Saṃkalpa-s, one should pay respect to the Supreme according to the dictates of the Veda-s. All the external forms of worship of Ātman are not the proper ones. But one should, through wisdom, without any pain or conception of duality, pay respect to it. As long as there is the pure intelligence of wisdom within, so long will there be Dhyāna and proper Ārādhana. One should ever be Jñāna, whether engaged in the perception of objects through the five organs of sense or while sleeping, talking, walking or breathing. The Dhyāna (contemplation) of Ātmatattva

constitutes the articles of worship in this Ārādhana of God. Through no other path can the great attain true Jñāna. Even if the ignorant perform this Dhyāna of Ārādhana for thirteen twinklings of an eye, then it generates the good effects of the gift of a cow; if the real Ātmic deity is contemplated upon for a hundred seconds, then it will be tantamount to the good effects of a thousand Aśvamedha sacrifices; if continued for twelve minutes, then the good effects of a lakh of such sacrifices will ensue. If steadfastly continued thus for twenty-four minutes, the beneficial results of a Rāja-sūya sacrifice accrue; but if Ātma-Jñāna is meditated upon for half a day, without any distraction of thought, then there is the benefit of a lakh of such Yajña-s. Again, if for a full day such meditation is continued without any intermission, then one will merge in the stainless Brahmic Light. This is the highest Yoga and this is the highest Karman.

‘ I have treated, up to now, of the external worship of the Jñāna-God. Now I shall deal with its internal worship. Without ever forgetting the God Paramaśiva within the body, one should contemplate him in all one’s actions such as going and coming, sleeping and rising, enjoying wealth and objects, and yet be detached from them. Though associating with the diverse objects of the world, he should ever worship the Śiva-līṅga¹ with the flowers of Jñāna, after bathing

¹ The Līṅga is one of the forms through which He has to be worshipped. It is a great mystery.

in the sacred waters of Tattva-jñāna. This Jñāna-God pervades everywhere in the thirty-six centres without the modifications of the mind, in Manas, Saṃkāla-s, the state intermediate between Prāṇa and Apāna, the heart, the middle of the throat, the middle of the brow, the tip of the nose and other centres. Ceaseless and continued contemplation should be made upon God, shining as a Light in the body inseparable from Manas, eyes, the organ of speech and other organs and all the hosts of Śakti-s, like chaste women who are inseparable from their lord; also the Manas which enables one to cognize the three worlds should be contemplated upon as no other than the guard at the gates; thoughts should be known as the guard of the inner apartments; the Vṛtti-Jñāna thoughts as no other than ornaments on the perishable body; the Jñānendriya-s and Karmendriya-s as his gates. With these thoughts, he should contemplate that he is no other than "That" which is the direct Jñāna of Ātman, endless, partless non-dual and yet containing all in itself, full in itself and making all full, equal everywhere and having its natural laws, the light within all. Thus should the internal worship be done, realizing that one is inseparable from it.

‘Much illumination will arise through this pure worship. Through the intelligence which sees the equality of all, the body will be known by pure souls to be burdensome. Therefore they ever worship the Jñāna which transcends the body, with the above articles of worship. The wise say that such is the

worship practised by the great. They should continue worshipping Jñāna without longing for the things they cannot get or being hindered in the acquisition of objects. They should worship Jñāna, extracting Ātmic bliss out of eating and drinking, wealth, rest, going in vehicles and other pleasures. They should worship Jñāna by bestowing on it the flowers of unsullied actions, even amidst mental or bodily malady, dire pain, the cumbersome administration of regal justice or sharp adversity. They should worship Jñāna, whether they enjoy objects or abandon enjoyments.

‘Enjoying with a sweet mind and a non-dual consciousness whatever objects one comes across, and not longing for things inaccessible, is Jñānārcanā (or the offering of flowers, etc. to God). Unfailing worshippers of Jñāna should regard pleasure and pain as of the nature of Jñāna (and hence be indifferent to them). They should regard all forms and places as no other than Brahman and worship them as such. Like an ocean receiving unto itself innumerable rivers, Jñāna is the capacious reservoir of all enjoyments, a state of not hating anything nor longing for them. Without being affected by appearances, base or high, they should be engaged in worship, in order to free themselves from all duality of conception arising from pleasure and pain in the differences of space, time and substances. These are the beneficent articles of worship prescribed in the great worship of God.

‘Just as the six tastes—sourness, pungency, bitterness, astringency, etc.—are enjoyed completely, only

when the Śakti-s of taste and the mind join together, so the Plenum arises when all these articles of worship are combined with Śānti (quiescence of mind). When this quiescence of mind is attained, then in an instant all objects become the one universal nectar, like the ambrosia of the moon; but if contemplation is attempted without quiescence of mind, then even Jñāna (spiritual) objects will appear like stones. If the illusions of pleasure and pain arising from objects which are differentiated through space, time and substance be dispelled, then the God within the temple of the body will be clearly cognized without any desires arising.

‘Pure Māyā dispels impure Māyā and destroys the poison of Saṃkalpa. Like a washerman who removes dirt with dirt (i.e. a kind of alkaline soil), the impure Māyā should be slain by the pure Māyā. Though pure Māyā is not the cause, yet it appears so through the Ācārya’s (teacher’s) words. The real inquirers after knowledge are enabled by the Teacher’s words to know their own Self. An Ācārya’s grace, in a mysterious manner, enables the disciple to perceive directly the Brahmic Principle within, though it is impossible for the Teacher to point to Brahman as this or that or for the disciple to understand how it is prior to his direct perception. Each should cognize it within himself through his own Jñāna with the aid of an Ācārya and an understanding of the true significance of the many Śāstra-s. It is indeed very rare to attain that state without the help of a Teacher and spiritual books. Should all the three combine, i.e. an Ācārya, Jñāna-śāstra-s

and a true disciple, then it is certain that the state beyond bondage will be attained. If the link between these three lasts long, then it will generate pure Jñāna like the sun bringing in its train actions in this world. Following the above-mentioned path, there is no doubt they will render themselves fit objects of eulogy by such as myself and attain the Brahmic state.

‘This world, though it really is not, appears to be. Know, Oh Vasiṣṭha of great Tapas, that it is no other than a reflection. Know also that Jñāna is that Principle which is known by the Vāc (Speech) of Brahmā and others. This Caitanya (consciousness) which is above all, manifests itself as the duality of visible things. Undergoing different names, it contracts Ahaṁkāra through the mind’s thoughts. This idea of “I” brings in its train the idea of time, space and other potencies. With these attributes the name Jīva accrues to it. Contemporaneously with it, there arises Buddhi in ignorant souls. Associated with the potencies of sound, actions and Jñāna, the collective entity produces memory in one instant and in another instant becomes Manas in order that it may be the seed of the tree of Saṁkalpa. This is what is called the Puryaṣṭaka body. It is said that this is the seat of words. Through Ātman, Manas assumes countless forms. This alone, assuming the form of Ākāśa, etc. generates Prakṛti and other elements. Like evil spirits arising in the seeming void, the Vāsanā-s of the mind arise in it.

‘Now if these Vāsanā-s which are synonymous with existence in the world are destroyed, then there will

be absolute quiescence. Those who are clinging to the idea of permanency in this "I" or the universe, which is but a mirage in a desert, are not fit to be initiated (into Jñāna). Such persons are condemned by the wise as extremely sinful. The wise initiate only those discriminating persons who have discarded all illusions; they never dream of initiating the weak-minded, who are subject to worldly illusions. Should they do so, it will only be like mating a virgin in the waking state with a husband seen in the dream state. Oh Vasiṣṭha, we have thus given a reply to thy questions. Mayest thou grow in true love. Let us go.'

So saying Pārvatī and Parameśvara with their retinue journeyed on in the Ākāśa. At their departure, I saluted and worshipped them with flowers. From that day onwards, I have been unintermittently worshipping the true Jñāna on the path of ever-increasing bliss and freedom from pain. Through such assiduous and continued worship, I feel now the Vāsanā-s to be as light as a feather. Neither during the day nor during the night do I find interruptions in my worship, because of the offering of the flowers of right conduct. When the knower and visible objects unite as one, then all Ātman-s (egos) become equal. In such a state of union what the Jñāna-yogin-s cognize is that which is in that state (there being nothing external to them then). This is the supreme worship of Jñānātman. Therefore, through this kind of vision (or idea), may you live, Oh Rāma, in this world with a mind unattached to things. Do not afflict your mind by letting it rove over this great forest of a world.

Here Rāma said, overjoyed: I have cleared myself of all doubts. I have known all that should be known. I have attained thy grace without the least inconstancy of mind. I have slain all desires, which are like huge elephants with long trunks. I do not become agitated by anything. Having crossed the ocean of existence, free from all delusion and pain, my mind has become a diamond filled with Brahmic bliss and is now Bliss itself.

3. THE STORY OF THE BILVA FRUIT¹

Summary—In this story, the illustration is given that the expansion of Bliss, arising from the worship of Jñāna, is the All.

Rāma continued: Though the nectarean shower of thy words has fructified in me, my heart is not content. Please therefore throw more light on this all-full Jñāna.

To which the Muni replied: A thing which is sweet and pleasant to us at one moment produces the very reverse of that sensation in another. Who has not experienced this in this world? When longed for, things are pleasant; they are bitter if not longed for.

¹ The fruit of a tree commonly called Bel (*Ægle marmelos*), and spherical in shape.

Hence desires are the cause of pleasure. Pleasures cease when satisfaction arises. But if desire ceases, all else will be destroyed. Therefore, Oh Rāma, who wishest to divest thyself of association with objects, mayest thou be free from all desire, from all thoughts, from thy (lower) mind. If thy Antaḥkaraṇa (lower mind) be devoid of Vāsanā-s, then it will never be disturbed from its equilibrium, in spite of the many obstacles on its path.

The mind has the potency of creating or undoing the whole world in the twinkling of an eye. Therefore mayest thou slay this mind, either by the destruction of the Vāsanā-s or the control of Prāṇa. The base Avidyā has the property of expanding and contracting. Through these two (expansion and contraction), the ever-yrating Karman-s take life and die. Therefore thou shouldst annihilate this mind of Ajñāna (ignorance) by the power of constant association with Ācārya-s and Jñāna books.

The mind is destroyed by the control of Prāṇa or the arrest of the fluctuation of the mind. Such a condition is termed by the wise to be the supreme state. The Bliss which arises when visible things and sight are merged into one (the seer) is the all-pervading Paramārtha (Reality). Beyond 'That', nought else is. Through such vision (or direct perception), the mind is destroyed and generates infinite bliss. Such Bliss has no increase or decrease, no appearance or disappearance. The mind of discriminating Jñānin-s cannot be termed mind but only Tattva (Reality).

That which becomes differentiated through diverse objects is the mind. It will become immaculate, like copper transmuted into gold. This Reality of Jñāna, having become the mind, will sport once in this universe and then reaching the Turya (fourth) state will become that eternal Verity which is above Turya. Hence Brahman can be one as well as many like this variegated cosmos. All are Brahman only. The differentiations of the mind, etc. do not really exist and are the numerous, manufactured illusions of the brain. Now I will illustrate the same. Listen, Oh Rāma, to a brief anecdote which will astonish even the learned.

There is a Bilva fruit of such huge dimensions that neither Koṭi-s (crores) nor Mahā-koṭi-s nor lakhs of Koṭi-s of Yojanā-s can measure it. It will not decay even when a Mahā-kalpa closes. Though the ancient of ancients, its glory is such that it is more soft and delightful than the moon on the third day of the waxing fortnight. It will remain quite unruffled even in the midst of the fierce storms and gales at the end of a Kalpa; it is the seed of Brahma's egg. It is indeed impossible to set a limit to the number of mundane eggs which are generated out of it, and are absorbed in it. Though ever ripe, it will never decay. It is the quintessence of all other fruits. The fleshy part of this fruit is unlimited and typifies the all-pervading nature of Jñāna. The marrow of the fruit is the fluctuating Cit-śakti which, arising in the fruit (of Brahman) that is equal in all, produces, through its potency of intelligence, heterogeneities of Ākāśa, the Kalā-s (parts),

the imperishable Law, motion, the dome of Brahmā's egg, time, the several quarters, etc. which are represented by the different portions of marrow in the fruit.

At this statement of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma queried: Oh first of Jñānin-s, I have understood this allegory of the Bilva fruit. Oh Ācārya, this Bilva fruit is the supreme state of the Sat of Jñāna. Ahaṃkāra, etc. are but the base aspects of Jñāna. Oh Acārya, Jñāna which appears as the one and the many has never any differences *per se*. The marrow of the pumpkin which is Brahmāṇḍa is Mahāmeru,¹ etc. while the marrow of the Bilva fruit of Jñāna is no other than the extensive universes arising out of Ahaṃkāra, etc.

4. THE STORY OF ŚILĀ, A GRANITE

Summary—In this story it is sought to exemplify that all things, though appearing different, are no other than Brahmic Light.

Vasiṣṭha continued: Oh Rāma of exquisite beauty, listen again to another story. There is a glorious, huge granite rock which is impartite, strong, soft, and endless in dimension. Out of it, lotuses beyond number have grown and bloomed. Their leaves are tacked on, one to another and close set. Some are visible and

¹ The central axis or column of man as well as the universe.

others invisible; some become the higher ones and some, the lower. Some are firm in their own state. Innumerable are the conch-shells in the middle of these lotuses having no roots. Discuses also grow in great numbers betwixt the lotuses. Here Rāma remarked that he observed one such huge granite in the rock of Śālagrāma¹ whereon Viṣṇu stood.

The Muni continued: The granite I refer to is not one that you have ever seen. I apply the word granite to the Cit in the heart in which are the different states of the worlds. The granite is the Jñāna in the heart containing the worlds, which are one and yet many. In the non-dual and strong Jñāna-rock are the hosts of universes, like the air pervading the Ākāśa. Earth, Ākāśa, Vāyu, mountains and the quarters, even when combined, do not make an infinitesimal particle of this rock. In this beautiful thing are to be found the sacred marks of lotus, discus and conch.² It may be said to be in the Suṣupti state. All the universes are but Jñāna itself, like parts of a rock which are no other than the rock itself. The wise say that it will ever be as it was before. Though, as in the granite rock, heterogeneous universes with their various marks are absorbed in the heart, yet Cit is non-dual without any differences. Like the analogy of a forest of lotuses appearing (at a distance) like one stone, the universes without being

¹ A kind of sacred stone said to symbolize Viṣṇu and found in the river Gaṇḍakī.

² The symbols of Viṣṇu.

differentiated in Jñāna are one replete Cit. Have you ever seen lotuses, etc. growing out of a big rock? Similarly the three worlds are (not born out of and absorbed into Jñāna) but the light of Jñāna only. As in the afore-mentioned illustration of the marrow of the Bilva fruit, the many mundane eggs that have become differentiated merge into the one Cit. But you should not conclude therefrom that it is many. The Sat aspect of Brahman manifests itself as this motley universe of forms which are like lotuses in a granite. Then they will reach the seat of Ātman conquered through Suṣupti, quiescence and equality of mind and Jñāna.

5. THE STORY OF ARJUNA

Summary—Even wars, etc. will not create differentiations in the mind, if it does not long for the result of actions.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma said: I have known all that should be known. I have seen all that should be seen. And yet I have to put another question to you in order that bliss may be enjoyed in full. Please describe the form of this Puryaṣṭaka body which, like an image in a glass, creates this universe over and over again.

To which Vasiṣṭha replied: Brahman which is without beginning or end and which is the seed of the

universe, becoming differentiated, is Jīva; subjecting itself to the idea of separateness, it becomes Ahaṁkāra; with Manana (contemplation), it becomes Manas; with the certainty of intelligence, it becomes Buddhi; then the five elements (sound, etc.), through Indriya-s (the sense-organs). With the thought of the body, it becomes the body itself; with the thought of a vessel, it becomes the vessel. A form (or subtle body), having such a nature, is called by the wise Puryaṣṭaka body (composed of the eight: Manas, Ahaṁkāra, Buddhi and the five objects of sense, sound, etc.). The speedy transformation of the pure knower, or actor, or enjoyer and witness into the Jīva consciousness is called the Puryaṣṭaka body. Through the newly engendered Puryaṣṭaka body, dreams upon dreams pile up and this universe appears real with the many creations of illusion.

Now, therefore, hearken to the path pointed out by Lord Kṛṣṇa who strode the earth. Just as Vijaya (Arjuna) will pass his time fearlessly, so also, Oh Rāma, shalt thou pass thy time.

Then Rāma queried: When will Arjuna (Vijaya) be born? And into what will Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Lakṣmī, initiate him? Then Vasiṣṭha related the path pointed out by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Vijaya in the following manner: Yama (death) will, at the end of every four Yuga-s, brood over the carnage of Jīva-s (egos) perpetrated by him during the Yuga-s and therefore will perform Tapas. At one period, he will sit at it for eight years; at another, for ten years; at another, for twelve years. Sometimes he will sit for five years;

again for seven years; again for sixteen years, and so on. While Yama thus performs Tapas without slaying any Jīva, the Jīva-s will become so great in number that the earth will be thick with them. It is at such junctures that the Lord has been relieving the earth of its burden through the proper means from the very commencement. Then will the four Yuga-s, the countless Jīva-s, the universes and all else perish.

In conformity with this universal law, Yama, the son¹ of the sun, will retire into solitude for the performance of Tapas for twelve years, satiated with the carnage of Jīva-s, in order to attain a state free from the trammels of pain. Then the goddess of earth, unable to bear the load of the multitudinous hosts of non-deceased Jīva-s, will fly for asylum to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu exhorting her to return with the promise that he would incarnate on earth in two forms, one as the son of Vasudeva and another as the son of Pāṇḍu, will fulfil his promise by appearing under the two names of Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) and Vijaya (Arjuna). Then the victorious sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Duryodhana and others, along with their kith and kin, will² wage an unjust war with Arjuna and his hosts. In the battlefield, melting with compassion at the prospect of the death of his innumerable kinsmen, Arjuna will relax his hold over his bow, feeling faint. On account of this, Kṛṣṇa

¹ The present sun is called Vivasvat, the father of the present Manu.

² This shows that these incidents were before the Bhārata war.

will initiate him into Jñāna. Now mark well the truths which Kṛṣṇa, the Śarīrin (the spirit within the body) will impart to Vijaya, the Śarīra (the body).

They are as follows: ‘Now Arjuna, cognize, without any fluctuation of mind, the Ātmic Reality which cannot be known through the mind and which is without beginning or end. It is without defects. You will thereafter not be born or die in this fleshly tabernacle. You will be Sat only. There will be no birth or death then, no form then to differentiate by the terms, “I”, “thou”, etc., no ego to reincarnate. Though in the body of this eternal and ancient Principle, you will never be destroyed. Without failing to perform actions, you can do them without the least longing after fruit. If you tread the indestructible path of Brahmārpaṇa (offering all things to Brahman), you will, in an instant, be of the nature of Brahman. Ascribing all things to the Lord, may you become of the form of Īśvara himself; and having become the lord of all Jīva-s under bondage, may you reach Mokṣa without the hold of Saṃkalpa-s and with equal vision over all, of quiescent mind, with Tapas, Saṃnyāsa (renunciation), taintless Yoga and Jñāna.’

Arjuna asked: ‘Oh Lord, what dost thou mean by the destruction of Saṅga (association or attraction), the offering of all things to Brahman or Īśvara, Saṃnyāsa and the undifferentiated Jñāna and Yoga?’

Kṛṣṇa replied: ‘The wise say that the Brahmic Principle is “That” which is devoid of Saṃkalpa-s, pain or thoughts. The effort to attain the non-dual

Brahman is Jñāna. Such effort is also termed Yoga by the wise. The cognition, after true discrimination, of the identity of the universe and "I" with Brahman is Brahmārpaṇa. The renunciation of the fruits of Karman-s (actions) is Saṁnyāsa. The destruction of the Saṁkalpa of the mind is the destruction of Saṅga in the eyes of the great. The giving up of the conception of duality, knowing that there is only one Īśvara is Īśvarārpaṇa. After contemplating and worshipping me, you will attain me and then the true Reality of "I" will shine within you with its full light.

'I have two forms (or aspects), one the ordinary or the lower, and the other the Supreme. The ordinary is where I am represented with a body having hands holding discus, conch, etc. In the other, I am Brahmic Reality of a non-dual and imperishable nature, without beginning or end. This is my supreme aspect. So long as your mind is too weak to grasp this aspect of mine, you should engage yourself in the worship of my form with four hands. Through such worship, Jñāna will become full in you and you will then attain my supreme form. Then the disease of existence will not afflict you. Being freed from (Abhimāna) identification of self with objects, Ajñāna and all other attractions, those Jñānin-s ever continue on the Brahmic path who worship my supreme reality, indifferent to pleasure and pain and devoid of all desire. The wise say that those who are engaged in actions without any Saṁkalpa-generating desires have burnt all Karman-s in the Jñāna fire. May you,

without afflictions, perform only those actions which will help you to obtain Jñāna, the Reality, without any thought of worldly prosperity or objects in the future. The wise never deviate from the proper path into which they are initiated by their Ācārya-s, whether Pralaya (dissolution) sets in with fury or the Vindhya hills are shattered to pieces. In the absence of stainless Tattva-jñāna, Vāsanā-s appear as if eternal; if the great ocean of Tattva-jñāna begins to expand in one, then it washes away all Vāsanā-s.'

Thus was Śrī Kṛṣṇa pleased to initiate Arjuna. Then he became silent, while the victorious Arjuna addressed him thus:

'Oh Ācārya, the pain afflicting my mind has disappeared and like a lotus at the approach of the sun, my mind has awakened to knowledge of the Brahmic Principle.'

6. THE STORY OF THE HUNDRED RUDRA-S

Summary—Having shown that Jñāna will arise, even though a person is engaged in such action as war, etc. the author proceeds to state in this story that Jñāna vision enables one to cognize Ātman directly.

So Vasiṣṭha related another story to the valiant Rāma: A Saṁnyāsin (ascetic) living in a certain country was a great Jñānin and able to go into

Samādhi at his will. Through a long course of Samādhi, he had reached such a stage as to objectivize all mental impressions into real images. The Vedas say that every thought has its own reflected image. One day he returned from Samādhi. And then a thought arose in his mind that he should engage himself sportively in the ordinary actions of the everyday world. With this notion of the mind (that he shall become another person), he at once transformed himself into another. Then no thought arose in him of rebecoming the Saṁnyāsin he was before. Like a crow accidentally sitting on a palmyra fruit, the Saṁnyāsin became, through his desire, another person named Jīvaṭa. The mind functioning in the body of Jīvaṭa roamed on the streets of a certain town produced by a similar phantasy and then dwelt there. There he quaffed in sport some alcohol, became excited, and went to sleep like a bee intoxicated with honey. In that sleep he dreamt of becoming another Brahmin, like a tree becoming a seed. The Brahmin in the dream now became a sovereign over the earth. Then this king became an erudite Brahmin in his dream. Through mental reflection, this Brahmin Pandit seemed to go to another country and live there for some days. Then he slept one night and found himself transformed into a celestial lady in his dream. She, tired of her amorous sports, was deep in sleep, when she metamorphosed herself into a hoofed hind. This hind, while asleep, saw itself as a creeper with which it is ever associated. Oh King, even beasts see in their dream

the reflections of objects which their minds have cognized in the waking state, through sight or hearing. This creeper which was resplendent with diverse flowers, soft tendrils, fruits, etc. formed, as it were, the abode of a sylvan goddess. This goddess, through her power of intelligence, presided over the whole forest, and looking within, went into the *Suṣupti* state, when her creeper-body was transformed into that of a beetle. Boring its way into the lotus stalk in a pond, it entered within. Even apparently unintelligent worms and other creatures have their own states of consciousness (at their own particular levels). While the beetle was sporting in the lotus leaves on the waters, a rutting elephant rushed in and agitating them, began to crush the lotuses and the beetles on them. The beetle looked at the elephant into which it was transformed at once. This tusker with its long trunk fell into a pit. Thereupon the mahout of a certain king bound it fast and leading it to a war, caused its death. Ere its death, it became a beetle through its association with another beetle. This beetle, being again crushed to death by another irate elephant, which caused a tremendous tumult in the waters, was transformed into a *Hamsa* (swan) by having such an idea. This swan underwent a series of incarnations in different wombs and at last was born as an incomparable swan in a certain lotus tank. This swan flew up at once in the *Ākāśa* and seeing *Rudra* in his world, contemplated him as itself. Thereupon it attained the form of *Rudra* who, roving according to his free will and pleasure along

with his Gaṇa-s (hosts) in the world of Rudra, was full of Jñāna and became Śiva (Brahman) itself.

It was at this stage that Rudra began to see in retrospect all his past lives, through his pure mind. Having, as Rudra, an unobscured vision and a Jñāna body, he sat in solitude and began to contemplate the marvels of his past hundred dreams of lives: 'Truly wonderful is it to behold Māyā deluding all in this universe with the idea that the universe is real, while it is as unreal as a mirage in a desert. Thus have I been wandering in diverse places in this great forest of Māyā. With the creation of my mind, I became a person by the name of Jīvaṭa. In another creation I incarnated as a Brahmin well versed in all departments of knowledge; then a king in another creation; then I went through a series of births numbering a hundred in all. Now I am a Rudra. Long years and Yuga-s and numberless actions have passed. Let me therefore dive into my many past births and see them at close quarters. Let me, after observing them fully, relate them to one another and render them a homogeneous whole.'

Meditating thus, Rudra traced his way to the former Saṁnyāsin and, having awakened him from his trance, concentrated his mind with true Jñāna. Thereupon the Saṁnyāsin woke up and looked about, free from reminiscences of his illusory life. Again did Rudra contemplate the illusory form of Jīvaṭa and reach, along with the ascetic, a certain part of Jñānākāśa. Through them, Jīvaṭa attained a conscious state and accompanied them both. All the three—Rudra,

the ascetic and Jīvaṭa, full of Jñāna—were free of the least surprise, though there was every reason for it. They had three separate bodies, though they were the non-dual Brahman itself. They visited the several localities in which the Brahmin and others incarnated. Being free from all stains, they found that the divine Jñāna alone incarnated in so many bodies and as so many resplendent Rudra-s. Thus did all these Rudra-s¹ attain Jñāna. Being asked by Rudra, the real one, to go to their respective places, each departed to his own realm. Jīvaṭa, the Brahmin and others then lived their respective lives along with their consorts, and quit their bodies at the appointed time and merged into Brahman itself.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, the valorous Rāma remarked upon the wondrous nature of the Muni's words and wishing to know the cause of all these marvels said: How came the Saṃkalpa of the Saṃnyāsin to generate the living forms of Jīvaṭa and others and become an actuality? Are not all forms created out of Saṃkalpa unreal? Please enlighten me.

Vasiṣṭha replied: All things are in Cit and come out of Cit only. It being all, it becomes whatever it contemplates as being. This is the truth. That which is seen in dreams, that which arises through Saṃkalpa, such things will always be in that place and

¹ The Jīva-s or egos are called here by the name of Rudra-s. This corroborates the statement of H. P. Blavatsky that the Hindu sacred books term egos by different appellations such as Rudra-s, Asura-s, etc.

have the form contemplated. Those objects which arise through Saṃkalpa or dream will not appear to be an actuality now, except through the practice of Yoga which makes one merge in Brahman. It is only through Yoga and Jñāna that Īśvara and other Deva-s see all things as they are everywhere. Objects which are longed for are easily obtained by those who have practised continued meditation. How can persons going towards the south reach the north pole? Those who long for objects through their Saṃkalpa will attain them; but those who wish to attain their own Ātman never think of objects. The ignorant mind, which is the seat of all objects before it and which fondles Saṃkalpa in great amity, is impeded in its progress, if it concentrates itself upon two objects at the same time and not upon one of them alone for its destruction. With the thought of being a Vidyādhara or a Brahmin, one becomes so. This is an illustration of the Siddhi which flows out of intense, concentrated thought. Therefore, through powerful Samādhi, the Saṃnyāsin's Jīva became Rudra in the non-dual Principle. Then through the Saṃkalpa of Rudra, it understood the real nature of all objects attained. Then Jīvaṭa and others, who arose through the Saṃkalpa of the illumined Saṃnyāsin, saw joyfully their respective universes, through Rudra's form. Through true Saṃkalpa, they attained Tattva, the Reality; and through their Saṃkalpa, they reached the seat of Rudra-jñāna.

7. THE STORY OF THE VETĀLA (GOBLIN)

Summary—Having shown that the series of births which appear as so many illusory dreams are of the nature of Brahman itself when seen with true (divine) vision, the author relates this story.

May you be in the partless Brahmic state, having destroyed all Saṃkalpa-s so as to prevent the least dawning of the lower mind and thus being in the silence (*mauna*) of Suṣupti. So said Vasiṣṭha when Śrī Rāma questioned him thus: What is meant by the silence of (*vāc*) speech, (*karāṇa*) organs and (*kāṣṭha*) body as well as that of Suṣupti?

To which the Muni replied: There are two kinds of Muni-s, ordinary and supreme; the former are called the (*Kāṣṭha*) bodily Tapasvin-s and the latter Jīvan-mukta-s. Oh protector of the earth, the wise say that under the former category come those persons who, developing a firm will by the process of Prāṇāyāma, control their organs by the Haṭhayogic method. But they who, having known the true nature of the universe, contemplate the Ātman within themselves, and are quiescent within, though moving and acting in the world, are the pure Jīvan-mukta-s. Therefore the true *mauna* (silence) is that exalted state in which the mind of a Muni rests. The control of speech is *vāk-mauna*; the subjugation of the organs is *karāṇa-mauna*; the cessation of one's physical actions is *kāṣṭha-mauna*; these are the three kinds of silence, wherein the mind's functions are not paralysed. These

three pertain to the first class of Tapasvin-s. But the wise say that Brahmic bliss without beginning or end and without pain, whether enjoyed by one with direct cognition of such a bliss or not, is the *suṣupti-mauna* of Jīvan-mukta-s. The expurgation from the mind of all doubts, after realizing firmly the illusory character of this world with all its Guṇa-s is *suṣupti-mauna*. The realization that the universe is no other than the all-full, auspicious Jñāna is termed by the wise to be *suṣupti-mauna*. Equality of vision over all and quiescence of mind, knowing that all that is Sat, Asat, or Sat-Asat are no other than the eternal Cid-ākāśa, is stated to be *suṣupti-mauna*.

Suṣupti-mauna has two subdivisions: Sāṃkhya and Yoga. Those who cognize everything to be Brahman itself, through extensive erudition, daily, un-failing meditation (Niṣṭhā) and inquiry through the sacred books, are the Sāṃkhya-yogin-s. Those who easily attain the supreme, eternal state through such means as the control of Prāṇa, etc. are called the Yoga-yogin-s. The eternal, quiescent state is the asylum of all. This state is the goal for both. Should both Prāṇa and mind, caught in the trap of Vāsanā-s, be annihilated, that is the Brahmic state.

Without inquiry, the mind appears to be real; but with inquiry, it will vanish into thin air. Can that death be real which one dreams of in dreams, as occurring to oneself? Firmness of concentration upon the stainless, non-dual Principle, control of Prāṇa and the subjugation of the mind—these three are the

paths to cognize the meaning of Mokṣa. Out of these three, should one be mastered, then the good effects of all the three will be obtained, as all the three are inseparably related to one another. If mind and Prāṇa cease to exist, then thoughts will not arise. Both are one only, like the flower and its fragrance or sesame seed and the oil in it. Prāṇa and mind stand to one another in the relationship of the supporter and the supported. If either of them is slain, then the other also will cease to exist. The destruction of both will confer Mokṣa on all. So long as thoughts are not thoroughly destroyed by persistent practice, one should concentrate his mind on one truth at a time. Through such constant practice, one-pointedness will accrue to the mind and instantly the ghost-like thoughts will vanish.

Now listen, Oh Rāma, to the queries of the powerful Vetāla waking up in the Turya state, after its long dream of births and deaths. Sore pressed by hunger, a Vetāla living in the great Vindhya forest went to a foreign country to find prey. It was in the habit of feasting itself upon enormous meals. In spite of suffering from the effects of the gastric fire within, it never made prey of any human being without sufficient reasons. Will the great ever deviate from the path of rectitude? This Vetāla left the forest for the country to find as prey a human being, after discriminating between a spiritual-minded being and the opposite. The ruler of that country was one night patrolling his kingdom when the Vetāla, observing him, thundered aloud in

the following words: 'Oh king, thou art now under my clutches. Thou art going to lose thy life at the hands of myself who am like a terrible lion. Thou wilt presently fall a victim to my stomach.'

The king said: 'If thou approachest me without true Jñāna, thy head will be splintered into pieces.'

The Vetāla replied: 'I never slay a person without good reason. I deal with all in perfect justice. As thou, Oh king, art able to redress the grievances of all seekers, I hope thou wilt extend thy helping hand to me too. That which harrows me is the doubt I have in my mind. Mayest thou relieve me from my perplexities with the bounty of thy replies. The questions are the following: Of which sun are all the mundane eggs like so many scattered units? Through what Vāyu does the endless Ākāśa or Atom shine? What is that light which is clear and unchanging, even though dream upon dream arises in it? What is that Atom which, when penetrated within, evinces the same nature, like a plantain stalk which is made up of layers. What is that non-differentiated, primal Atom which expands itself into the infinite, small atoms of the mundane egg, Ākāśa, the numberless egos, the resplendent sun, Meru and other objects? Beside that great mountain which is the original, formless Atom, these universes resemble a stone.'

At these queries of the Vetāla, the king simply laughed. Listen, Rāma, to the replies made by the king.

The king answered: 'It is in the ever-dawning Jñāna-sun, that all the universes shine. Compared to

the rays of this sun, all the universes are so many atoms only. By the sun's light the universes shine. It is the whirlwind of Brahman that reduces to dust, Kāla (Time), Ākāśa, fluctuation, Cit and other existences, and makes them shine in their true state. The all-pervading Brahman shines in its own nature, impartite and with true quiescence, though dream upon dream arises in this prolonged dream of the universe. Like a plantain tree which, when probed into, yields layer after layer till at last there is the stalk, so Brahman alone shines within the infinite series of universes arising deeper and deeper in the recesses of space. It is the Brahman, spoken of above, that, being subtle and above all intelligence, is the supreme Atom. As it is endless, it is the cause of Meru and other objects. The vast expanse of Meru, etc. appear but as small atoms when compared to this. Being unreachable, this Brahman is the supreme Atom; being the Plenum, it is a great mountain. This Ātman, though having diverse forms, is yet without form and of the nature of the true Jñāna, being the substratum of all. Of this unknowable Ātman, all the universes are only the marrow. In the midst of that which is Vijñāna alone, the universe is.'

Having heard these words of the king, the Vetāla cognized Reality, and became quiescent in mind. Then retiring to a solitary place, he entirely lost his hunger and remained in pure Samādhi without any fluctuation of mind.

8. THE STORY OF BHAGĪRATHA

Summary—Having shown that all will be Brahman through *śuṣupti-mauna*, the author now proceeds to illustrate the fact that the same result can be achieved by the giving up of Saṅga.

Oh Rāma, be of illumined mind as clear as Ākāśa through the non-fluctuating, internal Ātman, drawing your mind away from objects and by performing worldly things for duty's sake only. Making your mind be at peace without any desire or despondency, destroying your impure mind through your pure mind, and being the resolute Maunin, non-dual, of the nature of quiescence alone and with equal vision over all, you will be able to accomplish all things, if you can conduct yourself like king Bhagīratha who was of a firm and pure mind, untouched by ignorance, who performed all duties that he came across.

Rāma asked: Oh Ācārya, through what power of mind was Bhagīratha able to enjoy supreme bliss and bring down the divine Bhāgīrathī (Gaṅgā) from on high?

Muni Vasiṣṭha, acquainted with the four Veda-s, replied: There lived a king by name Bhagīratha who had cognized the non-dual Principle. He was a just protector of the earth. His hand was more liberal than the Cintāmaṇi gem itself. He was able, by bringing the waters of the Gaṅgā, to revive his many sires who had been reduced to ashes¹ (by the mere

¹ Ṛṣi Kapila reduced through a mere glance of his eyes the 60,000 sons of Sagara when they troubled him in reference to the horse let loose for Aśvamedha sacrifice.

glance of Kapila) in Pātāla and thus transported them to Satya-loka, free from the pains of hell. He brought all subjects under the sway of his parasol, white as the moon. This king began, in his infancy, to observe the ways of the world, teeming with pain. It is indeed strange that at such a tender age the subtle inquiry about spiritual things should have dawned with great steadfastness in his mind. Therefore, retiring into solitude, in order that he might give expression to his thoughts like a flowering plant in a congenial soil, he cogitated as follows upon the real nature of this universe composed of heterogeneous objects disconnected with one another: There is nothing new under the sun. All things pass away only to reappear under another form. Days gone by return again; nights recur again and again. The same gift and the same almsgiving recur again and again. So are the repeated acts of eating and other Karman-s. Persons entangled in delusion perform the same things over and over again without in the least being ashamed or tired of such acts. They are immersed in actions which make them droop, without conferring any good. That is true action, the performance of which enables one to attain that stainless One, beyond which there is nothing to be longed for; other Karman-s which tend to a conception of duality are poisonous diseases. Ajñānin-s ever repeat the same acts; not so the Jñānin-s.

Then Bhagīratha, whose mind was seized by the fear of worldly things, after a proper understanding of their true nature, went in search of a Guru, and having

found one by the name of Tritula, prostrated himself at his feet and addressed him in secret with great trepidation of heart: ‘ Oh Lord of Muni-s, is there any limit to the dire pain of mankind generated by dotage, death, delusion and other fears? Please enlighten me clearly on this point.’

Tritula said: ‘ If thou wilt cognize well thy resplendent Jñānātman, all thy pain will at once vanish; the bondage of thy heart will end; all doubts will be cleared; and all Karman-s will be destroyed. Then thou wilt become the Cinmātra (absolute Consciousness) that should be known. Thou shalt hear about this Paramātman from me. This eternal and all-pervading One is capable neither of repletion nor depletion. It is the true Jñāna, quiescent, immaculate, indestructible and without Guṇa-s. Such is the One Principle.’ So said the Muni Tritula who was without the conception of duality.

Bhagīratha said: ‘How can one be firmly established in the perception of the body and other objects as different from one’s Self and without association with base, worldly actions? Oh Ācārya, please favour me with a reply.’

Tritula said: ‘ The mind will attain Svarūpa Niṣṭhā (meditation of Reality) through its all-pervading intelligence. Then the supreme Jīva which has become all forms will never after subject itself to rebirths. The wise, having found Mokṣa, define Jñāna as associated with the characteristics of non-attraction towards wife, house, etc., indifference to pleasure and pain,

an equal eye over all, the realization of non-duality, though moving in the body, love of solitude without associating with mankind, a never-ceasing spiritual contemplation and an intuitive, direct perception. Paths other than these breed pain arising from ignorance. The annihilation of the identification of "I" with this body is the panacea for the disease of birth and death, generating passion and hatred. Then the Caitanya will be directly perceived.'

Here Bhagīratha interrupted the Muni thus: 'How is the idea of "I", which is firmly grounded in this body like a tree fixed on a mountain, to be removed?'

The great Ācārya replied: 'Should the mind be firmly withheld from entering into objects of enjoyment and made to rest in the all-pervading Sat, then Ahaṃkāra will cease. If after the destruction of desire for objects thou art in a non-fluctuating state, then the appearance of "I" will end and the non-dual state of Brahman alone will be. This is the Brahman spoken of by all Veda-s. Having given up all differences of caste, orders of life, etc., having assumed poverty without an iota of any of the three kinds of desire (for wife, progeny and wealth), having relinquished wealth in favour of thy enemies, free from Ahaṃkāra, and having given up thy avocations, if thou livest without any load on thy mind, thou mayest become Brahman, the Supreme of the supreme.'

Having heard these words of the Muni, Bhagīratha of massive shoulders, performed diverse actions with a view to control his mind. After the lapse

of some time, he performed a noble Yajña called Agniṣṭoma; after inquiry into the deserving and the non-deserving, all his justly accumulated wealth was spent amongst poor Brahmins of divine intent, relatives and others who came there. In three days, he was left with nothing but a single cloth. Amidst the deafening cries of his subjects and all others, he left his beloved country in favour of his enemy and being replete with all the good qualities of a Muni, wandered alone. Fearlessly did he rove over towns, hills and forests where the citizens did not know him by face or name. In a short time, he dispelled all the desires of his heart. Then he merged into Ātman through extreme quiescence of mind. Having wandered over the whole earth, one day he entered the country he had previously left in favour of his enemy, and having completely mastered all his senses, went from door to door to beg alms at the gates of his former ministers and others. Persons who recognized in him the former crowned king began to shed tears at his approach. Even when homage was paid to him and he was requested by the enemy king to resume the sceptre and protect his subjects, he did not give up his avocation nor long for even the smallest trifle. Then to the infinite chagrin and disappointment of all, he went away. Filled with bliss, through true quiescence of mind, without despondency of heart, he revelled in Ātmic vision within himself wherever he went, as did his Guru, whether wandering over mountains, forests or other places. Thus did the Ācārya and his disciple enjoy tranquil and equal minds; and supporting their bodies,

as if in sport, they were indifferent as to whether they had bodies or not. Roving happily and reflecting well upon the adoption of the course consistent with the universal law, they were indifferent to pleasure and pain or the intermediates and spurned as paltry baubles, wealth, women and the eight Siddhi-s, such as Aṇiman, etc.

The king of that spacious country having died without any male progeny, the ministers deliberated upon the nomination of a successor, when the mendicant Bhagīratha of graceful mien appeared on the spot and was chosen as a fit successor. Being anointed king, he wielded the sceptre over this realm, protected by innumerable hosts of armies. This news reached his former kingdom from where the courtiers repaired to him and implored him thus: 'The king, whom you installed in your stead, is dead. We are left without a ruler. So please accept the responsibilities of ruling over our kingdom too.'

As it is not proper to spurn the wealth which comes to one unsought, he assented to their entreaties. So Bhagīratha began to rule over the whole earth. Maintaining a perfect silence (or control over the senses), quiescence of mind and an equal vision over all, he was without desire, and steadfast. So following the even path of rectitude in all affairs, he performed faultless Tapas for many years to emancipate his grandsires, brought down to earth the divine river Gaṅgā, and established it there without diminution of its sacredness.

9. THE STORY OF ŚIKHIDHVAJA

Summary—In this story, it is sought to show that the path to the higher goal is rendered smooth by an Ācārya, as well as by true renunciation, though many obstacles may intervene.

Oh mayest thou merge thyself in thy all-peaceful Ātman, like the King Śikhidhvaja who annihilated that great bird called mind. So spoke Vasiṣṭha to Rāma, whereupon the latter questioned him thus: Tell me, Oh Guru, who was this King Śikhidhvaja who was absorbed in ecstatic enjoyment of all-embracing bliss? Be pleased to bestow on me thy blessing, so that Jñāna, which is the basis of everything, may arise in me and wax to its full strength. Thereupon the Muni replied: This king who bore the name of Śikhidhvaja was born in the Dvāpara Yuga after the seven Manu-s¹ had passed away. His justice knew no bounds, and he was devoid of the bad qualities arising from desire. He was full of charity and other virtues, and preserved a silence free from the discord born of words. He had cultivated mental and also bodily restraint and other powers of will, and especially delighted in doing good to others. His partner in marriage was Cūḍālā² born through Tapas in the womb

¹ The seventh Manu is Vaivasvata who is our present Manu.

² The present story, though intended to illustrate an Ācārya's grace and true renunciation, has an esoteric meaning underlying it. For instance, the word *cūḍālā* is composed of two parts which mean 'resting on the head'. Hence that which rests on the

of the queen of the Saurāṣṭra country, who resembled the peacock in beauty, and had no rival in the world to compare with her in imperishable virtue. These two lived together in perfect happiness, their minds interblended, performing actions without the least difference of opinion, having mastered all departments of knowledge. Delightfully indeed they passed their youth, as if but one breath of life pervaded their bodies. As the years glided by sweetly their youth passed away like water from a broken pot, and middle age fell upon them like flakes of snow on lotuses in the waters of a rivulet. Like water trickling from the palm of the hand, their lives sped away day by day. Then the desires, which had in youth, expanded more and more like a gourd plant that grows in the rainy season, ever winding itself round and round, began to decrease like waters in the autumn. All the pleasures that once arose in the body sped out of it, like arrows from a bow. Just as a plantain tree becomes useless after it has put forth its bunch of fruit, so they became indifferent to worldly actions after tasting of their fruit. In unison of heart they began to contemplate: Surely, that state is the most beneficial from which the mind, when it once reaches it, never returns to another. But such a discriminative state is

head, the Pineal Gland, is *Buddhi*—the Ātmic Ray. It is *Cūḍālā* who, though the wife of *Śikhidhvaja*, initiates him into *Jñāna*. *Śikhidhvaja* means one having the peacock flag. Careful students will understand from the colour of the peacock that he typifies the higher *Maṇas*.

impossible in the case of those plunged in mundane existence. Therefore the most exalted Adhyātma-jñāna alone is the sure panacea to cure the disease of rebirth.

Coming thus to the conclusion that rebirth cannot be avoided except through Ātma-jñāna they betook themselves to a life in which their minds were absorbed in true meditation. And for the attainment of their wish they constantly associated with the wise and learned. Thus they lived long together, exulting over their store of accumulated knowledge and leading a practical life of spirituality in accordance with that knowledge. Then the lady Cūḍālā, of true discrimination, having heard and clearly understood the real significance of the Śāstra-s taught by the wise for the attainment of the different stages leading to higher spirituality, began to commune with herself:

‘While Ātman exists (as I clearly perceive it), to what do we apply the term “I”? Whence is this delusion of the mind? To whom is it due? How did it arise? How can we apply the term “I” to the body visible to us? As the body is inert and ignorant, the term “I” cannot be applied to it. Again, can the term “I” be applied to the ten organs which vitalize the body? No, since like a tile which is moved by a rod, the ten inert and separate sense-organs are moved by the vagrant mind. Can the term “I” be applied to the Manas which agitates the organs through its power of Saṃkalpa? No, since even the Manas is inert, being goaded to action

by the certainty of Buddhi, like a stone flung from a sling. Nor is "I" the Buddhi,¹ as it is in turn galvanized by Ahaṃkāra. Nor is it the baneful Ahaṃkāra which galvanizes Buddhi, as Ahaṃkāra is the inert seat of Jīva (the higher ego). Once more, can "I" be applied to Jīva which moves Ahaṃkāra? Being of the nature of actions and Prāṇa, it rests in the heart and there enjoys the bliss of Pratyagātman. Hence Jīva is not "I"; thus I have now learnt through this inquiry that what renders Jīva blissful is Ātman, the true Jñāna. Such a Jñāna is never dimmed by objects, but will ever become clearer and clearer. My own Jīva exists only through Ātmic reality, the eternal Jñāna. Verily the state of Jīva, which becomes ensnared by objects, may well be likened to water in a deep pool, or an odour wafted by the breeze. This Jñāna-power, ensnared by the perception of objects which are illusory and composed of Tamas, becomes blurred and consequently inactive; hence is the present Jīva oblivious of its true state, like heat in a copious supply of water. Thus does the true Cit-Śakti become the Jīva and, having become unreal and Tāmasic through longing after objects, cognizes again its true state through Ātma-jñāna (by rebecoming that Jñāna).

‘This Ātma-jñāna is known only through one’s self and not through another. I have now known

•

¹ In the Hindu Vedāntic works, Buddhi, Manas, Ahaṃkāra and Citta are the four aspects of the lower mind. Buddhi should not be taken as the Ātmic vehicle, as in theosophical literature.

•

Ātma-jñāna, which happens only after long aeons of time. Through the non-cognition of the all-pervading nature of the supreme Consciousness, there arose in us the six organs, but if that true Cit is thoroughly cognized, then Manas, etc. are found to be illusory. The immeasurable Plenum of Jñāna alone truly *is*. This Jñāna is also called Mahācit or Mahāsattā. This Self-light that is undefiled, without suffering, inequality or egoism, is given also the appellations of Parabrahman or Paramātmā, and shines everywhere at the same time, being eternal, wholly pure and all-potent.¹

And thus it happened that through her divine introvision, the queen enjoyed daily the consciousness of the reality of Ātman, and remained steadily in that condition. Also, through the meticulous performance of her daily actions, without the least longing for their fruit, her desires and the leanings of her mind towards objects entirely ceased, and she was untroubled by the pairs of opposites, desires or hatred. In the performance of actions without attachment to results, her mind matured and became the receptacle of bliss. Then, through her unceasing practices, Ātmic reality—that true realization of certainty which is beyond all comparison and cannot be estimated by any except oneself—came to her direct cognition, and she shone with a radiant spiritual light¹ and became like a soft creeper bearing fresh flowers.

¹ This corroborates the fact that when a person becomes a Brahma-jñānin, a Tejas or spiritual glory surrounds him.

Now it came to pass that King Śikhidhvaja, noticing with pleasure the glorious effulgence that shone more and more round the form of his wife, and marvelling at a glory which surpassed any he had seen before, gave utterance to the following words:

‘How is it, Oh beloved one, that you now appear radiant with so much beauty, as if your youth had returned to you, as if you had become the prototype of beauty, had quaffed divine nectar and attained the Brahmic state of eternal, heavenly bliss? How is it that your mind is now blessed with tranquillity, devoid of the desire for enjoyment and free from instability? By what chance do you possess this perfect beauty both of mind and body? By your purity, I desire you to answer me.’

To this Cūḍālā vouchsafed the following reply: ‘Having abandoned this universe, which is both *rūpa* and *arūpa*, I attained that mighty and incomparable One which survives the destruction of all things in the universe; hence the radiant Tejas in my body. I have cognized that which is the substratum of all, being the atom of atoms and the homogeneous whole, without creation or destruction; thus arises this radiant Tejas in my form. Though I do not enjoy the objects of the senses, yet do I derive happiness therefrom without the pain attendant upon such enjoyment, and therefore attachment and hatred have taken leave of me. Hence do I glory in the possession of contentment and bodily beauty. In no way affected by the objects which I perceive with my eyes and through my mind, I realize

•

within myself that Consciousness (Caitanya) which has not the characteristics of the universe and is uncreate. Thus arises my beauty.'

At these words of Cūḍālā, her husband the king, without trying to probe deeper into her heart, smiled at her with a look of derision and addressed her thus: 'Oh lady with a waist slender like a plant, thou hast uttered words which but ill suit thee. Thou speakest as one who has lost her mental balance. How is it possible for thee, who revellest in the luxuries of regal wealth, to cognize Ātman? Even the greatest of men who, after giving up this paltry world, have attained that exalted, all-pervading principle, have done so only after disassociating themselves from the visible universe. How is it, Oh lady, that thou canst aspire after that which can be directly cognized by the wise only? Thou canst be said to enjoy it only as those unfortunate persons do, who not being able to attain that state, profess to have sensed it intuitionally within, and then turn away in sheer disgust. Therefore tell me what thou meanest. How can persons like thee realize the Ātman within? Thou art but a fragile creature, without much intelligence, unstable, liable to be tossed about by emotion.' So saying, he laughed aloud and departed. At this Cūḍālā only pitied the ignorance of the king, and remained calm with the consciousness of the Ātma-jñāna within, thinking that the king had not appreciated her words because of his conception of the duality of the visible universe and his lack of enjoyment of true bliss.

Yet this couple continued to live together harmoniously and happily as before. Preserving as she did perfect equilibrium of mind, the wife had complete mastery over her desires. But there arose in her, through her own volition, a desire to be a 'walker of the skies' (in order to convince her husband of her real powers and so lead him into the spiritual path). For this purpose she seated herself in a solitary spot, in a pleasant posture, in order to obtain enlightenment.

At this point, Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha to enlighten him as to the path by which such psychic powers as walking in the Ākāśa, etc. might be developed after a long and difficult course of practice. Vasiṣṭha replied: Albeit thou hast asked in the midst of the story of Śikhidhvaja for some light on the practice of Yoga, I shall vouchsafe a reply to thee. Hearken to the means which, having enabled one to control Prāṇa, will yield a rich return. The first and fundamental essential is that one should divest oneself of all affinity for objects, except those which adhere to the mind in the furtherance of actions upon which it is bent. The next is to follow a proper diet, an easy posture, purity of mind and body, knowledge of the true meaning of the many treatises on Yoga, and unremitting practice accordingly, with the help of a wise Guru. He should completely free himself of all anger and greed as well as of attachment to enjoyments and passion or hatred for others. If he studies practically the nature of the Prāṇa-s and then masters them, as a master his servants, their nature will enable him to rule the universe, to attain

Mokṣa and develop Siddhi-s. There is among the one hundred Nāḍī-s one incomparable, called Āntra-veṣṭanikā. It is spherical, like a vortex, or the circular sounding-board of the Vīṇā. This will be found to pervade all places and all bodies from those of Brahmā down to Jīva (the ego). Like the coiled body of a serpent when it sleeps, shivering with cold, this ever-immovable Nāḍī coils itself up and rests firmly through Prāṇa-vāyu. Like a plantain flower it is exceedingly delicate within. In this Nāḍī, it is said, there is a pure and resplendent Śakti (power) called Kuṇḍalinī which enables men to have mastery over the tremendous powers of Nature. This Śakti is ever hissing like an angry female serpent. It rears its head aloft. It is the cause of the fluctuation which takes place in the mind. All the other Nāḍī-s are connected with this Kuṇḍalinī Śakti. This Śakti becomes purified only by the immaculate rays of Jñāna. It is transformed into Jñāna rays through meditation; becomes Jñāna through Jñāna; a Jīva through the tendencies of a Jīva; Manas through Mānasa (contemplation); the manifold Saṃkalpa through Saṃkalpa; Buddhi through certain knowledge and Ahaṃkāra through egoism. Thus this Śakti rejoices in the name of Puraṣṭaka. Kuṇḍalinī Śakti, passing as Jīva, associates itself with the body which derives great benefit therefrom. Being of the nature of Prāṇa and Apāna, it goes up and down. As it is without fixity, it may take an upward course or a downward one, and produce death in the body through the Prāṇa-vāyu-s. Should the upward

and downward actions of this Kuṇḍalinī Śakti be arrested by the control of Prāṇa and this Prāṇa be made to rest in the heart, diseases will never affect those who have such control.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma interposed and said: Please enlighten me as to the origin and destruction of mental and bodily disease. In answer to this Vasiṣṭha continued: The pains that afflict the body are called the secondary diseases, whilst the Vāsanās that affect the mind are termed mental or primary diseases. We have reached our present state through the absence of the transcendental Jñāna, want of mastery over our sense-organs and the perpetual growth of desire and egoism in the mind. And our delusion becomes intensified in us by forgetting the degradation of our state through such causes. With the growth of such delusion, the mental disease also congeals in us like the snows of winter. When the intense desires of a person begin to manifest themselves externally and the Ajñāna in him preponderates, he performs fearful Karman-s and these in their turn breed bodily diseases. The body is further subject to diseases through such actions as the eating of unwholesome food, living in unhealthy countries, doing things at unseasonable hours, injuries inflicted, association with the wicked, longing after improper things, evil desires, bad thoughts, the distention and contraction of the orifices of the Nāḍī-s in the joints, etc. and the interrupted flow of the beneficial Prāṇa-s throughout the body—these cause the body to wither. These

•

flourish in the form of diseases in the body, waxing and waning like the floods in a river during the different seasons. The body attracts effects to itself according to the nature of its countless affinities, good or bad, whether in previous births or in the present one. Thus we see diseases, primary and secondary, arise through the fivefold Bhūta-s (elements).

Now listen, Oh Rāma, to the manner in which the two forms of disease, primary and secondary, are destroyed in two ways. The wise say that primary disease has two sub-divisions: *sāmānya* (ordinary) and *sāra* (essential). The former includes the diseases incidental to the body, while the latter the rebirth to which men are subject. If the diseases which afflict this body return to their primal source, then they are destroyed. Their primary causes being (bad) thoughts, if these thoughts are destroyed, all bodily diseases will vanish. But the disease of rebirth, coming under the head of *sāra*, will never end except through Ātma-jñāna. Is it possible to suppose that the misapprehension of a serpent in a rope can be removed except through the discovery of the real rope? But those grievous diseases of the body which do not arise through the original cause can be extirpated by Mantra-s, medicine and the many means used by men well versed in medical lore. I need not expatiate upon this subject any further here.

Here Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha how mental diseases arise and how they are destroyed. Vasiṣṭha proceeded: When the Manas is agitated, then this body also follows in its wake. And when the body is agitated, then there

is no proper perception of the things that are in one's way and Prāṇa flies from its even path on to a bad road, staggering like an animal wounded by an arrow. Through such agitation, Prāṇa, instead of pervading the whole body steadily and equally, vibrates everywhere at an unequal rate. Therefore the Nāḍī-s do not maintain a steady position, but quiver. Then to the body which is the receptacle of food digested partially or completely, the Nāḍī-s are simply death, because of the fluctuation of the Prāṇa-s. The food which settles down in this body amidst such commotion is transformed into incurable diseases. Thus through the primary cause (of the mind) the disease of the body is generated. If this primary cause be annihilated at its root then all diseases will be destroyed. Now hear of the path by which diseases may be removed by the uttering of Mantra-s. Like base gold which, when placed in the crucible, is transmuted through alchemical processes into pure gold, the mind is rendered unfailingly pure through true, virtuous and pure actions and by serving the wise. In the mind purified thus there is unalloyed bliss. Is not the whole world exhilarated with joy when the soft and delicious moon begins to shed its silvery light? If the mind becomes purified with true Sattvaguṇa, then Prāṇa-vāyu will begin to circulate freely throughout the body, the food taken will be digested properly and hence no diseases will arise. I have thus described to you the path by which the two kinds of diseases can be destroyed.

Now listen to what is taught regarding the path of Yoga, which enables one to master Kuṇḍalinī Śakti. To the Jīva which has the name of Puryaṣṭaka, Kuṇḍalinī is like the Prāṇa within, as the flower is to the fragrance. If, through the practice of Pūraka (inspiration), the aforesaid Kuṇḍalinī Śakti is replenished and caused to shine with a resplendent light, then the body acquires the stability of Mahāmeru, and becomes strong. Then, if the intelligence pervading this body which is filled with Prāṇa through inspiration takes an upward course, it will make that body become a 'walker of the skies'. With the agility of a serpent, Kuṇḍalinī Śakti will rise up, erect like a plantain stalk. Having drawn into itself (from on high) all the Nāḍī-s that bind the body like strings, it will cause them to inflate from below, as does a bladder although immersed in water. Thus, through intense practice of Yoga, the Yogin-s rise up into the air, and roam therein, though connected with the body, like a fish that is held by the bait on the rod of an angler.

If this Kuṇḍalinī Śakti gets into Suṣumnā, going up the Brahmarandhra, and having reached a distance of twelve digits (from the nose), stays there for two Muhūrta-s (48 minutes) after performing Recaka (expiration), by which the actions of all Nāḍī-s are arrested, then the person is able to see all 'walkers of the skies'. Then, through the divine vision, hosts of Siddha-s able to confer such powers as Aṇiman, etc. will appear before him, as things do in the dream state. If the Prāṇa is rendered steady for a long time,

flowing to a distance of twelve digits from the face through the practice of Recaka, then entry into other bodies can be effected.

Here Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha as to how such persons are able to make themselves atomic or all-pervading in the Ākāśa or to render their bodies light or heavy. Thus questioned, the Muni continued: There is that One Principle which is non-dual, absolute Consciousness, perfect equality, purity, quiescence, that has no relationship to the things of the universe, the most subtle of subtle things, which neither is this universe, nor is associated with it. Through its own Saṃkalpa, it differentiates into many units. Then it goes by the name of Jīva, on account of the many surrounding things which agitate it. This fluctuating Jīva, subject to the delusions of Saṃkalpa, regards this illusory body as real, as ghosts are regarded real by ignorant lads. The world will judge of this Jīva by the opinion of the majority of enlightened men in every age, who discern with trained minds. It is only by the exercise of a determined will that persons, although ignorant, can transform poison into nectar, or the reverse, thus entirely changing the nature of things. By contemplating the body, it becomes gross; thus also the visible body, through the realization of its unreal nature, again becomes a subtle one. All psychic powers, such as Aṇiman, acquired through meditation, are awakened by virtue of will and thought. This will be self-evident only to those who have mastered the Siddhi-s of Yoga through Self-illumination.

Having by these means developed the powers of Anīman, etc. Cūḍālā instantaneously moved throughout the world encircled by the ocean full of jewels, for the purpose of bringing conviction to her husband's mind. This lady who was not, at any time, a celibate, tried by all available arts to give her husband some idea of the bliss-giving Jñāna; but he was unable to benefit thereby, not able even for a moment to gain repose in that pure Jñāna. Like a child entirely ignorant of what education means, he was quite oblivious of the noble qualities of that great Yoginī Cūḍālā. As he did not rest peacefully in the Ātmic Jñāna within himself, she did not initiate him into the real secret of Jñāna. Would anyone be so foolish as to communicate to Śūdra-s (those who have no longing for knowledge) the real secret of Yajña (sacrifice)?

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma questioned him thus: How can others obtain Jñāna, Oh Ācārya, when even King Śikhidhvaja failed to do so, notwithstanding the inculcation of it by Cūḍālā of great Siddhi-s? What is therefore the right way of obtaining the true end? To which Vasiṣṭha replied: It is faith in the words of the Guru that paves the way for Brahmopa-deśa (initiation into Brahman). The pure and unalloyed intelligence of the disciple is alone the means of attaining Ātma-jñāna. Here again Rāma asked the Muni why an Ācārya's words should be necessary for the development of Ātma-jñāna, if the disciple's pure intelligence is alone the means to it? At which

Vasiṣṭha continued: In a certain forest in the Vindhya mountains, there lived a hunter, who was a man of great lineage. One day, having lost a cowrie-shell whilst travelling along a grassy road in the forest, he went in quest of it, filled with grief. Having vainly searched for it during three days, he came across a gem radiant with the lustre of the full moon. But the hunter passed by the gem—a gem so valuable as to purchase the seven worlds—in his anxiety to find the lost cowrie. Jñāna will come to a man in due season through the initiation of a Guru. When the mind is concentrated on one thing, there arises in it, through the action of the Guru, another kind of knowledge, not anticipated. Though the initiation by an Ācārya cannot of itself enable a person to obtain Jñāna, it can be the means of developing Jñāna in him, as the lost cowrie was the cause of the hunter finding the gem.

With this, Vasiṣṭha returned to the story of Śikhidhvaja. Being without Ātma-jñāna, the king was lost in illusion and gave way to grief regarding the enormous wealth he had so easily acquired, as destructive as a great forest-fire. He therefore gave various rare gifts, undertook many religious observances, and bathed in holy water; yet he was not free from the load of grief on his mind. Sorely afflicted at heart, he drew near him his wife Cūḍālā, and poured forth his heart to her: 'I have now no love of sovereignty and wealth, and I desire to lead the forest life. There, neither pleasure nor pain, danger nor wealth, haunt those who live

noble lives. Let me no longer be associated with the delusions of this earth. A forest life is, in all respects, preferable to the regal one, in which the longing for life and property does not die. Even the cool moon or Brahmā, or Indra, the Lord of the Deva-s, enjoying great wealth, cannot enjoy that bliss which comes only to a self-integrated mind free from desires. Therefore, do not blame me for leaving you and going to the forest. Married women, O well-beloved, do not oppose the desires of their husbands.' To this Cūḍālā replied: 'Flowers begin to blossom in the spring season, while autumn sees them yielding fruit. Thus do our Karman-s begin to fructify in their due time. If the body should begin to droop with old age, when bodily desires subside, then is the forest a fitting abode. But, at this period of your life, it is not meet that you should retire; therefore it behoves you not to go now.' To this the king made answer: 'Do not impede me in my plans. I will go to the forest for solitude; but as thou art young, it is not proper that you should accompany me. Thou shalt reign over the earth in my stead. When a husband goes from home, it is the wife's duty to protect those around him, and not to languish in his absence.' Thus saying he retired. The day being over, he performed his *saṃdhyāvandana*¹ rites, and having slept quietly near his wife, he stole out in the dead of night, unperceived by her. Telling his attendants that

¹ The daily prayers wherein the Gāyatrī and other Mantra-s are recited every morning, noon and evening.

he was going on a city patrol, he desired them to stay where they were, and departed from the town. Then, bidding farewell to his great, but enslaving possessions, he entered the forest, crossing, in the course of twelve days, many rivers and hills. At last he reached the inaccessible forest on the slopes of the Mandara hills, and made his abode there, in a spot surrounded by tanks full of lotuses and beautiful flowers. There he erected a *parṇaśālā* (hut made of leaves), and furnished himself with a bamboo rod, a rosary for recitation of Mantra-s, a cloth, vessels to hold fruit, etc. and deerskins. Then, in order to perform Tapas, in the first *yāma* (three hours), he performed the *saṃdhyāvandana* rites; in the second, he gathered flowers; in the third he worshipped Deva-s; and in the fourth he ate fruits fit for food. All night he was engaged in the chanting of Mantra-s. Thus did the king perform Tapas.

Cūḍālā who was sleeping in the palace, awoke, and not finding her lord who had lain by her side, was greatly afflicted; then she melted with compassion at the condition of the king, who she inferred must have abandoned his wealth and gone to the forest. She resolved to find out the whereabouts of her husband, for the husband is a wife's only goal. She sprang forth (in her subtle body), and passing through the window, went up into the sky, journeying through the air with so bright a face that the Siddha-s in the skies exclaimed, 'Lo! another moon has arisen here!' Then seeing her husband travelling in the forest with a bright sword in his hand, she meditated as to what course she should

pursue in regard to him. Then this sweet-tongued one came to the following conclusion: 'It is right that I should see him only after his desires and hatred have ceased.' With that she returned to her palace.

This divine lady informed her subjects that her husband had gone to a certain place on matters of a private nature. So she wielded the sceptre alone for eighteen years with true justice and an equal eye to all, living in her palatial mansion; while at the same time the king eked out his life of suffering in the forest.

Finding that the time was ripe for her to see her husband, she went forth one night through the skies. Having mounted on the shoulders of Vāyu (air), invisible to all, she alighted on the Mandara hills, and saw there a decrepit and melancholy body, which, at first, she did not recognize as her husband; but having, by her powers of Yoga, discovered it to be none other than he, she, filled with compassion, spoke these words: 'Lo! dire is Ajñāna! Because of it the king is groaning in pain. I have undoubtedly the power to confer Ātma-jñāna on him this instant; yet, lest he should spurn me if I, his young wife, should appear in my present form, I will assume another form suitable to accomplish my end. The king is in a state of mind which would permit his Ajñāna (ignorance) to be dissipated. At a single word from me, Jñāna will reflect itself in his now mature mind.'

Therefore, availing herself of this most opportune hour, she changed her form by means of her

incomparable Dhyāna, and descended from the Ākāśa before her husband in the form of a young Brahmin. The king at once arose, and paid him respect. This young Brahmin had a beauteous form, adorned by a garland of pearls; he wore a white cloth and a sacred thread and stood in the air at some distance from the ground. The king showed the newly-arrived guest to a seat beside him. The young Brahmin returned the salutations of this royal Ṛṣi of true will, and took a seat by his side. Then the king, with a full heart, spoke thus: 'It is only now with your arrival, son of a Deva, that I have reaped the fruits of my life.' So saying, he showered more attention on the young Brahmin, regarding him as his holy tutelary god. The Brahmin, addressing the king, said: 'Who in the world has the graceful qualities and modesty which you evince? May you live long! Did you, with a steadfast mind and with all worldly delusions extinct in you, perform Tapas only for the sake of obtaining liberation? Your abode in this forest, after abandoning the state of a king comparable to Indra, may well be likened to Tapas performed on the point of a sword!' At these words of the Brahmin, the king said: 'Being a god, thou hast well understood my condition. This thy knowledge surprises me. Whose son art thou, and what is thy name? What occasion has brought thee here? Be pleased to tell me all this.' To this the Brahmin, consenting to answer him fully, began: 'There was a Brahmin of the name of Nārada, like the true Jñāna-light, who sat in a delightful spot on the banks of

the holy Gaṅgā absorbed in Niṣṭhā (meditation). In the transition stage from that highest Samādhi down to the normal state, a sound of gaiety fell upon his ears, and he directed his gaze to whence it came. There he saw some Deva-girls of matchless beauty, like Rambhā and Tilottamā, playing in the water.¹ Seeing them thus alone, and not ashamed of their nudity, his mind was agitated, and he experienced the effects of sensual desire in himself.' When the Brahmin had said this, the king remarked: 'I have attained perfect equilibrium of mind through the sweet nectar of your words. It is difficult for me to follow their meaning as they are mystical like those pertaining to Paramārtha (the reality of the Higher Self). Therefore please inform me plainly of your origin.' To which Cūḍālā, in the form of the Brahmin's son, continued: 'Then, having fastened the elephant of the ever-fluctuating mind to the great pillar of true discrimination with the strong rope of love by the aid of the goad of true intelligence, the Muni Nārada released in the crystal pot near him that which produced an embryo. Then the embryo began to grow like the luxuriant moon in the milky ocean. Having been endowed by Nārada with a never-failing wealth of knowledge and other gifts, I who issued out of the pot, as the son of Nārada, was taken to the presence of Brahmā, who, in duty bound to me, his own grandson, helped to attain the goal of Brahma-jñāna. Immediately my grandfather called me by the title of Kumbhā-muni,

¹ These are the female powers in Svarloka.

as I was born in a Kumbha¹ (pot). The noble Sarasvatī is my mother; Gāyatrī,² my junior mother. I was always engaged with my friends, the four stainless Veda-s.' At these words of Kumbha-muni, the king said that he had reaped great benefit from the Muni's present visit to him, and felt assured that all he said was true. Kumbha-muni said that he had truly related his own life, and desired the king to inform him of his identity and origin. The king replied: 'Being afraid of the worries of existence, I sought freedom from action in this forest. I go by the name of Śikhidhvaja and am here, after having relinquished my regal duties. My mind stands aghast at this ever-recurring cycle of rebirth. Though I performed Tapas here after obtaining all things necessary for that purpose, I have enhanced beyond description my pain in the endeavour to do away with it. Oh incomparable Muni, milk has indeed been converted into poison!'

Then Kumbha-muni, addressing the king, replied: 'There will be true bliss only when the Jñāna instilled into a disciple by the Ācārya (Guru) fructifies in him. Are not all acts of Tapas simply diversion to while

¹ This probably refers to the advent of all egos which are so only through their limitation, just as things are deposited in a limited receptacle like a pot. Hence, Cūḍālā does not make a false report of herself, since in describing the origin of all egos she describes that of herself too. Kumbha-muni is the name of Agastya Ṛṣi.

² Gāyatrī, Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī are said to be the wives of Rudra, Viṣṇu and Brahmā; hence the negative aspects of the trinity of nature.

away the time? Oh king, to those without Jñāna, Karman alone is their security. Virtuous actions serve but to remove the impure Vāsanā-s. Therefore, Karman-s are useful only in so far as they confer upon us heavenly and other pleasures. If the impure Vāsanā-s are destroyed, then the effects of all Karman-s cease alike, as the effects of one season cease when another sets in. Like reeds which never produce fruit, Karman-s freed from Vāsanā-s never fructify. If, though the sure conviction that all is Brahman, Ajñāna is destroyed, impure Vāsanā-s will never arise. Who is so foolish as to suppose there is water in a mirage? If the Vāsanā-s are destroyed, then birth, old age and death will not affect one, and he will reach the immaculate Brahmic state. All minds associated with Vāsanā-s are but differentiated Ajñāna; a mind without them is the unborn Ātma-jñāna itself. If through the immaculate Jñāna, the Jīva cognizes Brahman, then all births cease. Since even Brahmā and the other great ones have said that Jñāna alone is the most excellent of things, how is it that you do not long for it? How is it that you do not question yourself as to who you are, whence came the universe, and into what it will be absorbed? Why do you pine at your lot, like the ignorant? Why is it that, after having prostrated yourself at the feet of a great Guru, you do not try to understand from him the nature of bondage and Mokṣa? If, approaching those persons who look equally upon all things through their abundant Jñāna, you are ceaselessly engaged in noble inquiry, then

you will surely gain that subtle Jñāna which leads to emancipation!'

At these words of Kumbha-muni, the king shed tears of joy and said: 'Oh Ācārya, I, poor soul, have learnt all this (the attainment of bliss through Ātma-jñāna) by thy grace. I am here in this solitary forest, having left the company of great men through Ajñāna. I have this moment been released from the pain of existence. Since thou deigned to be present with me in this forest, and hast deemed it thy duty to point out the path to me, thou alone art my Ācārya, my parent and my friend. Therefore, I prostrate myself before thee as thy steadfast disciple. Be thou graciously pleased to accept me as thy disciple. Be pleased, Oh thou equal unto Brahmā, to enlighten me upon that One Principle which thou hast cognized as the most bounteous, the One which, if known by a person relieves him from all pain, and confers the blissful Sat.'

To which Kumbha-muni replied: 'I can enlighten you only if you will concentrate your mind, which now runs quickly from one object to another, with singleness of purpose. Otherwise the Guru's words, taken lightly and not understood and meditated upon, would be of no avail even though heard. How can the eyes perceive objects in the darkness?' Here the king affirmed that he would receive the words with implicit faith, like the teachings of the Veda-s, and would meditate upon them truly through the Muni's grace. On hearing these words, the gracious Muni continued: 'I

have to demand as a first condition that you, Oh valiant king, will hear my words without interruption, and in the full belief that they will conduce to your welfare, like an ignorant child that hears the words of its father who is solicitous of its well-being.' Therefore, in order to instruct the king, the Muni continued: 'Oh king, please hear a story I shall relate to you, and I will afterwards reveal to you its hidden meaning.

'In ancient times, there lived a great man, well versed in all departments of knowledge, and possessing great wealth; but, alas! without Ātma-jñāna. This person undertook the search for Cintāmaṇi (a gem supposed to yield anything thought of) with much effort. Through the performance of Tapas, he came into possession of it after much trouble; for what cannot a man attain if he takes the necessary trouble? Now, when the gem appeared to him, shining with the lustre of the moon, he, without taking it in his grasp, thought thus: "I fear this is not Cintāmaṇi, but only some paltry stone. Can it be otherwise attained than by long and tedious search and when a man's life is nearly spent and his body debilitated by the search? Sinful persons like myself never attain it, though they subject themselves to all kinds of hardship. The virtuous—and only some among them—come by it. Can individuals acquire things readily by mere pining, and without regard to their respective Karman-s? I am but a man; my Tapas is very insignificant, and my powers small. I am poor in all respects. Therefore is it possible for a person like me to behold the rare Cintāmaṇi?

I will proceed to make further search for it." So saying, he let slip the golden opportunity, and the real Cintāmaṇi vanished from his sight. Shall good ever accrue to the ignorant? Thus did he again go in search of the gem, with great sorrow. After wandering in a perturbed state for some days, some Siddha-s (persons possessed of psychic powers), intending to dupe him, screened themselves from his view, and let drop on his path a piece from a broken earthenware bracelet, which he eagerly picked up. Then this deluded man, mistaking it for the true Cintāmaṇi, began to exult in its discovery and to marvel over it. Being in possession of this false gem, he renounced all his wealth, fully believing that the gem would fetch him anything he wanted, and that his present possessions were superfluous. Therefore, he retired to the forest, believing that happiness could only be obtained there, away from the men of depraved tendencies in his own land. Thus this man, who had anticipated the enjoyment of real bliss through this stone, subjected himself to all kinds of hardship, and degraded himself to the lowest level.

‘Hear from me another story which will be of great help to you in the improvement of your knowledge. In the heart of this ancient forest, there lived an elephant, the largest and tallest of its kind. Certain mahouts in the forest trapped this elephant whose tusks were exceedingly long, sharp and strong, and bound it with strong, iron chains. Becoming infuriated with its painful fetters, it shook itself free with the aid of its powerful

tusks in two Muhūrta-s (48 minutes). The mahout in the howdah above, seeing this, became giddy, and fell to the ground. The tusker, finding him upon the ground, passed by without hurting him. But the driver, picking himself up with unappeased passion, went again in quest of the elephant, which he found in the forest. There he dug a trench, covering it up with dry leaves and grass. The elephant, after roaming through the forest, came at last to the place where the trench was, and fell into it. Instantly the mahout bound it. Thus the elephant was again subjected to torture. Had this creature, which was like the great king Bali when guarding his own mansion, dashed out the brains of its enemy at the time when the mahout lay prostrate before it, it would not again have fallen into the trap, nor have been thus in pain again. Likewise, those who make no inquiry concerning good and evil in the future will come to grief.'

When Kumbha-muni had related this story, Śikhi-dhvaja asked him to give the reason why he had narrated the incidents concerning the Cintāmaṇi and the elephant; to which Kumbha-muni, of steady mind, replied: 'You are like that person who, though acquainted with all the Śāstra-s, yet without the beneficent Tattvajñāna went in search of Cintāmaṇi. For, although well versed in book-learning, you have not yet developed undisturbed equilibrium of mind. What I intended by the story of Cintāmaṇi is this: In order to attain true renunciation, devoid of all pain and hypocrisy, you have forsaken your regal office, your

wife, and other relatives, in which there was the true Cintāmaṇi, and have come to this forest. While true renunciation was developing itself little by little in you, even while in the world, your mind was led astray by undue zeal to a wrong conception of renunciation, and was enveloped by delusion similar to a dark cloud which obscures the sky.

‘ This renunciation of yours is not a true one, generating real happiness. You lost track of it, because you thought that this renunciation of yours, if persisted sufficiently long, would at length give rise to the true one. Having lost the gem of true renunciation, you have been misled by the false idea of Tapas through your faulty vision, and have, therefore, been greatly afflicted. The wise say that those who reject the happiness accessible to them in their daily lives, and allow their minds to search after imaginary and strange things without limit, are only self-destructive and corrupt in thought. Through the idea of Tapas as the means of bliss, your mind in no wise acquired that peace it desired, even when the priceless Cintāmaṇi was before you; nor was there any advantage in the discovery of the bit of earthen bracelet.

‘ Now hear the truth about the elephant. The epithet “ elephant ” I applied to yourself. The two long tusks are Vairāgya (indifference to pleasure and pain) and Viveka (discrimination). Your Ajñāna is the driver who sits upon the elephant and goads it. Your Ajñāna afflicts you in many ways. You are now afflicted by the pain inflicted by Ajñāna, like the

elephant bound by the mahout and led by him. The iron chains and fetters are the bonds forged by desire, and you have been bound by them. Know that desires are stronger and more durable than iron itself. Iron chains wear out, given a length of time, but the desires which prevail grow more and more. The breaking loose of the elephant from its strong bonds stands for your relinquishment of all desires and going into the forest. The fall of the driver from the howdah represents the destruction of your Ajñāna through Vairāgya. If once we free ourselves from desire, shall Ajñāna and the necessity for rebirth exist?

‘If the delusion of wealth is abandoned through asceticism, Ajñāna will only hover about like a ghost on a tree when it is being felled. But if the delusion of wealth be destroyed through the action of Viveka, then Ajñāna will take flight like a ghost from a tree already felled. With the destruction of Ajñāna, all its retinue will depart. As soon as you reached this forest, your Ajñāna was levelled to the ground like nests of birds in a felled tree. But you did not chop off the Ajñāna with the sharp sword of uninterrupted renunciation. Since you did not do so, you again began to groan under pain. Now the digging of the trench by the mahout refers to the generation of pain in you through the growth of Ajñāna. The leaves and dry grass spread upon the pit refer to your actions during your very painful Tapas. Thus are you suffering from the restraint of your Tapas like the powerful Bali imprisoned in the lower regions of Pātāla.

Why do you grieve and not listen to the words of the delicate Cūḍālā of infallible utterance? Why have you rejected the true renunciation?’

To this the king replied: ‘I have given up my kingdom, my palace, my wealth, and even my dear wife. Do not all these actions constitute perfect renunciation? What more would you have me renounce?’

Kumbha-muni replied: ‘Though you have given up your kingdom and the rest, that does not constitute true renunciation. You have yet desire for objects. It is only by entire rejection of them that you can hope to attain the Brahmīc bliss of the wise.’ Then the king said: ‘If you are pleased to say that the giving up of many worldly things does not amount to renunciation, and that I have yet desires in me, then what I have left is this forest alone. Therefore do I now renounce my longing for the forest full of hills and trees. Now I suppose I have made the true renunciation.’ Kumbha-muni then said: ‘Even the abandoning of this hilly and luxuriant forest does not comprise true renunciation. You have yet some painful desires. Only when they depart from you, can you obtain and enjoy the supreme happiness.’ To which the king replied that if this was not enough, he would lay aside his cloth, Rudrākṣa (garland), deer-skin, earthen vessels, and wooden bowl. So saying, he consigned them all to the fire and rejoiced in his entirely new appearance. Then turning to Kumbha-muni with the comment that he had now stripped

himself of all desire, the king said: 'It is through your divine self alone that I have acquired right understanding, liberated myself from all pain, and freed myself from contamination. Through my Saṃkalpa I have entirely given up all these things. The innumerable things of this world lead only to bondage which conduces to rebirth. The enlightened mind receives a degree of bliss commensurate with the absence of desire for objects. I have obtained bliss only through successive victories over my desires. I am free from the bondage of delusion. I have now attained through your grace the perfect renunciation, and am divested of everything. What else remains to be done, Oh Muni?'

Kumbha-muni replied: 'Alas! you have not renounced anything. All your deluded renunciations are in vain.' The king reflected and said: 'There is left with me only this body composed of bones and flesh, in which the serpents of the five sense-organs hiss. I shall instantly dispose of it without care. You shall soon see.' So saying, he ascended to the summit of a high cliff, and was about to cast himself down, when Kumbha-muni arrested him with these words: 'What is this folly that you are about to commit? How, Oh ignorant man, did this body of yours hinder your progress? How will death in any way help you? Though you should fall down and destroy this body, like a bull that is angry with a tender calf, yet you will not achieve true abnegation. But if you, Oh king, will give up that which is the cause of agitation in this

body, and which yields the seed of all births and Karman-s, then true renunciation will result. This is the unqualified truth.'

Then the king asked the Muni to reveal the means by which that which is the cause of the agitation of the body might be avoided. Thereupon the Muni of transcendent qualities replied: 'The wise say that the mind (Manas) which, through its Saṃkalpa, passes under the different appellations of Jīva and Prāṇa, is the cause of attachment to delusive objects, and is distinct from the beneficent non-Jaḍa and the Jaḍa (the inert). At the same time it is said that this Citta (the flitting mind) forms the universe as well as bondage. It is this mind which is the germ of all Karman-s and daily agitates this body of ours, like a tree when swayed by the wind. Therefore true renunciation, Oh king, lies in the abnegation of the mind. It is this which leads to Brahmic bliss. All other renunciation cause suffering. If, after true renunciation, you are illumined in mind, with perfect quiescence, and without hatred, then the identification of yourself with the Self which is Brahman takes place, and you will shine with resplendent glory.' Then the king asked the Muni: 'What is the cause of the mind? What is its true nature? How can I destroy it?' To this the Muni replied: 'The true nature of the mind consists in the Vāsanā-s. The two are synonymous. Know, Oh king, that the idea of "I", which is the source of all frailties, is the seed of the tree of mind. The sprout which at first germinates from this seed of

Ahaṃkāra (I-am-ness), originates without form and is ascertainable only by internal experience. This sprout is termed Buddhi. From this sprout the ramifying branches called Saṃkalpa take their origin. As a result of such a differentiation, Manas, Citta and Buddhi are the different names or qualities of the one Ahaṃkāra. Therefore, daily you should lop off the branches of this tree of Manas, and eventually destroy the tree at its root completely. The branches or Vāsanā-s will naturally produce innumerable crops of Karman-s; but if, with the sword of Jñāna you sever them from their trunk, they will be destroyed. They are the true vanquishers of the mind who perform without attachment the Karman-s which fall to them, silent, controlling all thoughts and desires. The lopping of the branches is considered only as a secondary thing, the first being the eradication of the tree at its root. Therefore, if through virtuous actions you destroy the idea of "I" at the root of the tree (mind), then it will not again spring up.' At these words of the Muni, the king asked him where the fire which destroys the conception of Ahaṃkāra, the seed of the tree, was to be found. To which Kumbha-muni replied: 'It is Ātma-jñāna which inquires concerning the true nature of "I"; that is the fire which destroys the mind.'

The king then said: 'Through my intelligence, I inquired into the origin of "I", in diverse ways. As this world is non-intelligent, it is not "I", neither is this body, nor the organs, nor the contemplating Manas, nor Buddhi, nor the injurious Ahaṃkāra creating

egoism.' Here Kumbha-muni interposed and asked, if the 'I' were not all these, what else was it?

To which the king replied: 'I am of the nature of that stainless, absolute Consciousness which, having evolved everything, preserves and destroys it. I cannot find out the cause of this "I", which is of the nature of Jñāna. I have not been able to divine the means which remove Ahaṃkāra, the seed of the pain-giving mind. My mind has misgivings when I find that Ahaṃkāra clings to me, howsoever much I thrust it aside.'

Kumbha-muni said: 'Oh king, no effects can ensue without a cause. Search within to find out the cause of Ahaṃkāra ever present before you, and tell me what occurs in your mind.'

The king replied: 'The cause of the Ahaṃkāra is Bodha (knowledge). How does Bodha get absorbed here within me? I droop only when Bodha arises in visible objects. How then am I to avoid these visible things?'

Kumbha-muni said: 'If you tell me the cause of knowledge, I shall then throw light upon it.'

The king said: 'Through the existence of such illusory objects as the body, etc. knowledge is induced; but if they cease to exist, then no knowledge can arise. Then the seed of Manas, namely Ahaṃkāric ideation, will be absorbed.'

Kumbha-muni questioned him: 'If the body and other objects of sense really exist, then knowledge exists; but as the bodies, etc. do not really exist, what then is the basis of knowledge?'

The king, in reply, said: 'But tell me first, Ācārya, how this visible body, which palpably enjoys the effects of all Karman-s performed by the hands and other organs, can be non-existent?'

Kumbha-muni answered: 'As this body, arising through Karman-s, is not itself the cause, the effect of intelligence is non-existent. That intelligence is itself illusory. Hence Ahaṁkāra and other effects, which arise through the delusion (of knowledge), are also non-existent. Hence also all objects which are not of the nature of the cause are illusory, like the misapprehension of a serpent in a rope.'

Then the king asked: 'There are the many creations of Brahman, who is the primeval one in the universe. How then can you say that Brahman is not the cause of the universe?'

Kumbha-muni replied: 'Prior to every fresh creation Parabrahman alone shines as Sat, which is the non-dual and the quiescent. As That alone exists without a second, the supreme Brahman cannot be the cause.'

The king asked: 'Then is not Parabrahman the cause of Brahmā?'

And Kumbha-muni replied: 'Parabrahman is that which is the absolute, the imperishable, the immeasurable, the immaculate, the birthless and deathless, unmanifest, unknowable, beneficent, the beginningless and endless, the non-dual and the ineffable one, beyond the reach of thought. How can Parabrahman which is unthinkable be the cause? How can it

be the actor or enjoyer? Therefore this universe is not created by anyone, nor is it self-created. The supreme Saṃkalpa of that absolute Consciousness is Brahmā. Nought else is but the one true Jñāna. All objects created out of that Jñāna are said to be no other than the form of that Jñāna. All here are Brahman itself devoid of rebirth. Having thus convinced yourself of the one Reality, if you destroy the Ajñāna (ignorance) within your heart, then it will cease to have any resurrection. Through no path other than the destruction of these excessive Karman-s can the delusion, which has become in us a certainty, vanish. If the Ajñāna in us fades away gradually, then the conception of the certainty attributed to the universe will diminish and the Brahmic state will be attained. Such a mind, through the all-pervading Jñāna, namely Paramātman, into which it is absorbed, will ever be evolving fresh creations (through its Saṃkalpa). That which is named Brahman through Ātma-tattva is nought other than the quiescent (or passive) aspect of this universe.'

Here the king said: 'All that you have taught me is quite reasonable. As prior to creation there is no creator, there is really no universe. Hence the vision of all things does not really exist. Through your clear elucidation I have understood well and have become of the nature of my auspicious Self. Hence I do not cognize external objects as existent. I have worshipped my real Self. Through the knowledge derived from the perception of many substances, I

have come to perceive them as unreal. Through this Jñāna, I have become the quiescent without thought and the Plenum like the Ākāśa.' Then Kumbha-muni, able to confer enlightenment upon the king, said: 'The true discrimination of space, time, the spacious quarters, mental actions and the rest, is only to understand the universe in its differentiated aspects. Though these distinctions have existed in you from a remote past, yet they will perish in you in a short time. The quiescent and indestructible Brahman will alone be, as you will presently cognize.'

Instantaneously, the king attained Jñāna, and shone with it. Thus was he released from the fold of Māyā. Then through the grace of the Muni, who was pleased to dispel the delusion from his mind, he was absorbed into the Brahmic state. Being freed from the actions of his mind, sight and speech, he, in one moment, became the Plenum in the Brahmic state. After he had been for two Ghaṭikā-s (48 minutes) in that state of Nididhyāsana (meditation), he awakened, and the supreme Muni said: 'Have you enjoyed to the full, free from all pain, the divine bliss of the Brahmic state, which is the ever beneficent, the immaculate, the pure, the soft, the seat of all Nirvikalpa-s and of fullness. Have you been illumined with Ātmajñāna? Have you been freed from all delusions? Have you known that which is fit to be known? Have you seen that which is fit to be seen?'

To these questions the king replied: 'Oh Lord, through your grace I have been able to cognize

that state of Brahman which remains after all else is over, which confers the divine wealth of bliss, and which is the grandest and the most transcendental of all. I have been able to acquire the otherwise unattainable, heavenly nectar of great bliss, and move in the company of those great souls who have Brahmajñāna through the blessing of association with you. How was it not possible for me, your humble servant, to attain this immeasurable, supreme nectar before?’

Kumbha-muni said: ‘It is only when there is quiescence in the mind and an indifference towards all enjoyments, and when the powerful Indriya-s are turned inwards and the Ajñāna of the mind is destroyed, that the noble words of the wise Guru enter and pervade the mind of the disciple like the scarlet water of the forest impinging on a white cloth. Otherwise such words drop down like the impurities of the body or the fruits of a tree. The doubt arising in one’s mind regarding the existence of duality or non-duality in this world betrays Ajñāna; its removal constitutes Jñāna. Jñāna alone is our highest goal. Through illumination you have attained liberation. May you be alone as the great Maunin¹ after having acquired divine wealth and given up the sins of the

¹ Maunin—lit.: one who is silent. Construing this literally, some Yogin-s in India preserve silence of speech. The author explains this word in another part of this book to mean one who is free from the longings of the world though moving in it; hence silent to the desires of the world, and not in speech. The great Maunin is said to be Śiva.

world. Then the king questioned: 'Are not the actions of Jīvan-mukta-s performed through the mind? How can things go on without the actions of the mind? Please enlighten me on these points.'

Kumbha-muni replied: 'The mind is not other than the Vāsanā-s generating many rebirths. If one knows his own self, then there is no fear of rebirth. For those who have cognized their self without any obstacles, the pure Vāsanā-s with which they perform Karman-s will not entail rebirth. Such a mind is called Sāttvic; but a mind without Jñāna is generally termed the Manas. A mind of Jñāna is Sattva itself, while persons without Jñāna act as dictated by their minds. The pure and wise always follow the Sāttvic path. Having given up all that tends to the attainment of Svarga (heavenly bliss), may you become that Self-light which shines equally in all. This is your real nature. Without hankering after paltry, terrestrial things, and thereby causing your mind to fluctuate, may you be firm as a rock. Those who have no (lower) mind drive away rebirth to a great distance. On this spacious earth, no pain will affect them. A mind becomes prey to fear through its fluctuation. Having mingled motion and non-motion into one and destroyed fluctuation of mind, may you be one with Jñāna.'

The king then said: 'How is this identification to be brought about? How are motion and non-motion to be mingled into one? And how am I to reach that state?' Kumbha-muni continued: 'Like the waters

of an ocean, all the universes are but the non-dual Cinmātra (absolute Consciousness). When this Cinmātra draws unto itself intelligence, then fluctuation is caused, like the wide waters moved by great waves. But the ignorant, without true Niṣṭhā (meditation), regard the Supreme Principle going by the several names of Śiva (the auspicious one), Cinmātra, Satya (truth) and Brahman, as the universe. A slight motion in this Cit (consciousness) generates this universe. If this visible universe of objects is truly cognized as the Jñāna bliss, then it will disappear. But when its real nature is not grasped, then visible things are seen as real, similar to the misconception of a snake in a rope. Should the pure mind concentrate itself for some time (steady and pure as the moon) through a study of the Jñāna-śāstra-s, association with the wise and uninterrupted practice of meditation, then in such persons developing Jñāna, a divine vision will arise, in which there will be direct cognition (of the one Reality). I have described to you the truths relating to the origin and destruction of the universe. Having brought these into practice and meditated upon them, may you, without fail, and according to your free will, attune all the actions of daily life to the attainment of the Brahmic state. I shall now go to Svargaloka, the gem of all Loka-s (worlds). This is the most opportune time for it. If I do not appear before my father* Nārada when he descends from Satyaloka into Devaloka, he will be displeased with me. A loving disciple should never incur the displeasure of

his Ācārya. Oh king, having done away with all differentiation arising through delusion, may you have the divine vision (of Nirvikalpa Samādhi).’ And with the words ‘I go away’, the Muni disappeared that very instant. Thereafter, the king thought to himself: ‘Marvellously strange is it that this incomparable state was in myself unobserved by me—a state like the crystal waters of a fountain, cool, pure and quiescent. It has enabled me to attain quiescence in the absolute Sat.’ Then the king entered the Samādhi state without any pain or fluctuation, without any motion, with true *mauna* (silence) and Nirvikalpa—immovable as a stone, without any desire.

Meanwhile Kumbha-muni resumed the gentle form of Cūḍālā and, journeying through Ākāśa, reached her chamber in the palace. There she ruled over her subjects, and protected them as she was wont to do. Thus she passed three years. After which, she went again in the guise of Kumbha-muni to the forest where her husband was, and beheld him as immovable as a pillar in Nirvikalpa Samādhi. Then, in order to acquaint him with her arrival, she made a leonine roar, even which did not wake him from his trance. Though she tossed him up and down, no impression was made on him, in spite of his body falling down. Then she thought: ‘It is certain that the king has merged into the state of Brahman. Oh, this is really wondrous. If, after concentrating my mind on his subtle body, I should find any residue of Sattva, typifying the seed of intelligence, in his heart, I shall join my husband

and live with him happily. Otherwise, I shall have to renounce this my present female form, and attain the supreme state of Brahman, so that I may not render myself again liable to rebirth.' Having come to this conclusion, she concentrated her mind and cognized through her spiritual touch and vision a residue of unsoiled Sattva in the king's heart, denoting the intelligence yet animating that body.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma questioned him thus: How can a residue of Sattva remain in those whose minds have been destroyed, and who have merged themselves in their divine inner vision? To which Vasiṣṭha Muni, of high intelligence, replied: Like flowers and fruit latent in a seed, a residue of Sattva, the cause of intelligence, rests always in the heart. Even in the case of a Jīvan-mukta, whose mind is destroyed, the body does not perish; but without being affected by pleasures or pain, though moving in them, his mind becomes inured to them. Therefore, Oh Rāma, this most divine lady Cūḍālā gave up the Kumbha-muni form and entering (in a subtle form) into the stainless consciousness (or mind) of the king, devoid of beginning, middle or end, caused that part of it, which she found had the residue of pure Sattva in it, to vibrate. Then she returned to her body, like a bird returning to its nest. Afterwards as Kumbha-muni, sitting in a certain posture on the earth, she chanted the *Sāmaveda* songs, as if playing on the Vīṇā. Thereupon the Sāttvic intelligence, which now began to manifest itself in the log-like body of the king, heard the *Sāmaveda* songs and

blossomed little by little, like a lotus flower blooming at the sight of the rays of the sun. Then the king's mind became steady as regards external objects and he saw Kumbha-muni before him. With an enraptured heart, and with the idea that his Guru, who had previously come to him in order to bless him with happiness, had come again of his own accord, he showered on him the choicest flowers, and praised him. Whereupon, Kumbha-muni regarded the lord of the earth and said: 'From the day I parted from you up to this very date, my mind has been inseparably blended with yours. Even Devaloka is not so pleasant to me as my association with you.' Here the king burst out, saying: 'Oh transcendental and holy god, I have attained bliss through thy favour, I have liberated myself from all pain through the Samādhi of true bliss. Even in Svarga, replete with virtuous actions, the bliss of Nirvikalpa Samādhi does not exist. Having attained that incomparable bliss, I shall roam freely in Devaloka and Bhūloka (earth).' Kumbha-muni then asked: 'Have you been enjoying the rare Brahmic bliss devoid of all pain? Have you annihilated the pain which is of the nature (or springs from the idea) of heterogeneity? Are you able to maintain an equal vision over all, after destroying entirely all the pleasures flowing from Saṃkalpa? Have you been able to transact all the present duties of life, without in the least being ruffled by objects, being liberated from attachment or hatred towards them?'

At these questions of the Muni the king gave the following answer: 'I have fully mastered all the

spiritual benefits that can possibly be derived by me. There is nothing more for me to long to see or to hear.' In this wise spoke King Śikhidhvaja, whose mind had overcome all delusions.

Thus did these, whose love for one another knew no bounds, cognize their higher Self through the beautiful inquiry of Ātma-tattva and through most instructive discourses; remaining happy in one another's company, without the least difference of mind, roaming over the forests and hills, they were matchless in real Jñāna and in true loving actions. Having destroyed completely the delusion of attachment and hatred, they were stable, like the great Meru, which cannot be shaken in the least by the playful zephyr. Sometimes they applied Vibhūti (sacred ashes) to their bodies; at other times, the fragrant sandal. While they were thus together, the sweet-tongued Cūḍālā concentrated her mind on that of the king and found it to be now free from all stains and stable by reason of his present experiences. She thought within herself that the palace, with its enormous wealth and luxury, would languish for want of persons to enjoy them. If persons filled with Jñāna should give up things that had come to them without their seeking, how then can they be said to have known Tattva (truth)? Then thinking of creating in herself, through her will, the body of a lady fit to live in wedlock with the virtuous king, Kumbha-muni (Cūḍālā), addressed him thus: 'Today a festival will take place remarkable in the annals of Devaloka. I should be there, without fail, in

the company of Nārada. Who can overstep the powers of the supreme law? At sunset, when the sun goes down over the evening hills, I shall be back with you. So saying, he parted from the king, after presenting him with a fragrant bunch of flowers. Having gone from the king's sight, Kumbha-muni relinquished the Muni's body and assumed that of lady Cūḍālā, after which, she entered unperceived the chambers in her palace, which shone like a Devaloka presided over by Indra, and then performed her regal duties during the day.

Then Cūḍālā reassumed the form of Kumbha-muni, and descending in that form before her husband, appeared with a dejected countenance. As soon as this Muni, whose mind was really free from all pain, appeared before the king with a downcast mien like a lotus enveloped by snow, the latter was startled to see the Muni, and rising up at once said: ' Oh my father, you seem to be afflicted with pain. What causes it? May you destroy it! Never do persons of true Jñāna succumb to despondency or joy. Can water floating on a lotus leaf affect it? ' At these words of the king, Kumbha-muni related the following amusing anecdote about himself in tones as musical as the Vīṇā.

' Persons of firm and equal vision as regards all things could never be considered Jñānin-s (the wise), unless they are involved in the actions of the Indriya-s, so long as they possess a body. Otherwise, such persons are only impostors. Those who are so ignorant as not to perform the existing Karman-s and think of

mastering them through avoiding them, will only generate fresh ones and suffer therefrom; like the oil which is inseparable from the sesame seed, the different Avasthā-s (states) of pain exist so long as there is the body. Those who try to dissociate themselves from these states, in order to do away with affection, etc. are, Oh king, like one endeavouring to rend asunder the immeasurable Ākāśa with a sword. If the inevitable pain of this impure body be sought to be averted by the control of the organs of action (Karmendriya-s), will the bliss arising therefrom compare in any way with that generated by the renunciation of bodily pain through the path of Jñāna? Even in the case of Brahmā and others, who have Karmendriya-s on one side and Jñānendriya-s (organs of sensation) on the other side of the body, the certain dictates of the imperishable Law demand that they do not rise above the Avasthā-s incidental to their body, even though they are illumined in mind. As both Ajñānin-s and Jñānin-s are exposed to the visible objects of the world, they move only in consonance with the universal Law, like the waters in an ocean. Through the certainty of their intelligence, looking equally upon all, Jñānin-s perform unruffled their daily duties so long as they are not relieved of their bodies. But Ajñānin-s are ever agitated by and drowned in pain and pleasure. They are born in different bodies and follow the laws regulating them.*

‘ Now I shall describe to you the pain I underwent on my path. Is not pain which cuts like a saw,

relieved when revealed to those we love? After I gave the bunch of flowers to you and rose up in the Ākāśa, I went to my all-truthful father in Devaloka, and attended the court of Indra, the lord of Deva-s. Then, desiring to return to this place from that world, I descended through the Ākāśa and was in the act of coming to this earth through the spatial Vāyu path (namely north-west of Sūrya-maṇḍala, i.e. the Sun's sphere), when I saw before me the Ṛṣi Durvāsa journeying in the region of clouds. Having prostrated myself before his venerable feet, I addressed him thus: "Thou art clad in dark clothes¹ and art beginning to act like an ill-famed woman longing for her paramour." The omniscient Ṛṣi became incensed at my impertinent words and with fury cursed me that I be transformed every night into a woman wearing beautiful ornaments. Hearing these words, I cried aloud and having contemplated the lotus feet of the Ṛṣi, was going to beg pardon of him, when all at once he disappeared. With this thought afflicting me, I have now come here to you. Hereafter every night I shall have to submit myself to transformation into a woman.² How can I, without being ashamed, be a female every night, moving as I do in the company of my Guru-s, Deva-s, Muni-s and hosts of others?" But the king consoled him thus: "Please, Oh god, do not be afraid. What is the use of giving way to grief? Let come what may through the

¹ Durvāsa is literally: ill-clad.

² This is to try the king—the first trial.

dire force of the irresistible Law. This womanhood of thine will, I think, not attach itself to the ego within, but only to the body without. It behoves thee not to give way to grief thus, thou who art replete with Jñāna. It is only the ignorant who are afflicted in mind.' Then the sun began to set as if to hasten the wise Kumbha-muni into assuming a female form. With the coming of twilight they performed all their daily religious Karman-s. Then the Muni looked into the face of the king, who was sitting before him, and remarked in a plaintive tone: 'To my great shame, be it spoken, Oh king, a female form is enveloping me and my present form is disintegrating. The significant marks of a female are developing themselves in me. Behold my waist forming itself, the female dress gradually covering my body, and the remainder of the female form appearing in its entirety.' Thus did the quiescent Kumbha-muni deliver himself, as if in terms of grief. The king beholding his despondent Guru, said: 'As a Jñānin you have known well the true path of Law. So, do not be afflicted by events which have inevitably to come to pass.' To which Kumbha-muni said: 'There is nothing to be done now. Who can thwart the insurmountable Law? Every night will entail on me a female form.'

So saying, both slept quietly. With early dawn she resumed her Kumbha-muni form. Thus did Cūḍālā pass some time, the days in the form of Kumbha-muni and the nights in the form of a woman; and yet she preserved her chastity. One noon, Cūḍālā in the

guise of Kumbha-muni addressed thus the king: 'Oh king, how long am I to remain in a state of chastity without tasting the pleasures incidental to the female sex? Therefore I wish to obtain a lord for myself. In all the three worlds, I cannot find a more affectionate husband than thyself. Thou shalt accept me as thy spouse at night. If thou dost, thou shalt fear neither heaven nor hell.' To which the king nodded assent.

Whereupon the Muni remarked: 'Today is a propitious day for marriage, it being the month of Siṃha (August-September). At moonrise we shall perform the marriage rites.' Then the beautiful-eyed king fetched from Mahāmeru rare gems and sandals, bathed in the holy waters and made prostrations to Deva-s, Muni-s and Pitṛ-s according to Vedic injunctions. Then both clad themselves in white silken robes yielded by the Kalpa tree. The sun having set, the resplendent moon began to shed its silvery rays when the king, after performing the Saṃdhyā rites, celebrated the marriage on the Mandara hills. Then they roved over hills and dales enjoying themselves, but without clinging in the least to such enjoyment.

Every three days, while the king was asleep, Cūḍālā would go to her husband's realm and administer justice, returning to her husband's side, as if she had not parted from him. Then this lady Cūḍālā, who now passed, since her marriage, under the name of Madanikā, lived with her husband for some time and reflected within herself: 'The king will never hereafter

centre his desires on worldly enjoyments. Therefore I shall test his mind with regard to the enjoyments of Devaloka. I shall by the force of my Yoga practice, through which I have developed Añiman and other psychic powers, create a Māyāvic (illusory) panorama in this forest, wherein Deva-s will appear with their lord Devendra at their head. Accordingly, when Indra appeared before the king, the latter saluted him, and having paid all necessary respect, said: 'Oh Chief of Deva-s, I do not know what good Karman-s I have performed to merit this visit of yours.' To which Indra replied in terms of affection: 'Attracted by the force of your good qualities, I have come here along with my retinue of Deva-s. Devaloka alone is a fit abode for you. The Deva maidens are awaiting your arrival there. May you be pleased to appear there like the sun, and cause to bloom the lotus-like face of Rambhā and other Deva maidens. Oh king and Jīvan-mukta, you may stay there for the period of a Kalpa, and plunge yourself in diverse ways in Deva-lokic enjoyment. Do not tarry here any longer, but come at once there. It is for this I came here to take you.'

Hearing these strange words of Indra, the noble king said: 'Oh my parent Deva, I have known all the pleasures of Svargaloka. I have not even the conception of differences of locality, such as this or that place. Wherever I am, there is heaven for me, and there I enjoy bliss. Therefore I do not long after Svargic pleasures. Be pleased to return to your seat.

I have not the least desire for it.' When the wise king had spoken these words, the Deva-s returned to their abode. Thus Cūḍālā observed that the king's (lower) mind had been destroyed, as proven by the different trials to which she had subjected him through her powers of Māyā. Yet she wanted to try him further, and so invented another expedient. One day, while the pure king was performing Japa on the banks of the Gaṅgā at moonrise, Cūḍālā entered a thick bower nearby and having created within it, through her Māyāvic power, a lover, seated on a pleasant seat of flowers, she made a show of embracing him. After having performed the daily rites and sought in vain for his wife Madanikā everywhere, the king saw on his return his wife and a male figure in mutual embrace but was not in the least disconcerted. Nearly forty-eight minutes after the king left her unruffled, without the least anger, Madanikā, in order to observe his demeanour, appeared before this Rājayogin with signs of her late love tryst such as dishevelled hair still visible on her, and stood as if penitent, in a submissive attitude of great shame.

While Cūḍālā, otherwise named Madanikā, was thus standing, as if greatly stricken by grief and remorse, the king returned from Samādhi, and saw her before him. Without the least anger, he said softly the following words with calm deliberation: 'How is it you have hurried and come away so soon? You may, Oh girl, if you like, still gratify your passion by returning to your lover.' At these words

of the king, Madanikā said: 'It is the supreme duty of the unblemished to put up with and overlook the faults of the ignorant. Women are fickle in diverse ways. Therefore, be pleased to excuse me for my heinous crime.'

Thereupon Śikhidhvaja of mighty Jñāna spoke the following words to his wife Madanikā: 'A tree may grow in the sky, but never will anger rise in me, Oh lady.' Thus he remained in full possession of equanimity. Then Cūḍālā said to herself: 'The king has destroyed to the root passion and anger. He will not subject himself to the many enjoyments and the love of transcendental Siddhi-s. This king of mighty arms has at last attained the end of Jñāna. Let me no longer pass under false colours. Let me cast aside the body of Madanikā, and assuming that of Cūḍālā, appear before him.' With this thought in her mind she transformed herself into Cūḍālā and presented herself in her true character before him, when the quiescent king looked at her and remarked in wonder: 'Is it true that I see before me Cūḍālā in her own form, speech, modesty of mien and other inestimable good qualities? Oh lady, who are you?' To which she replied that she was his lawfully wedded wife and continued: 'Oh dearest one, it was I who initiated you into the mysteries of Ātma-jñāna, assuming the bodies of Kumbha-muni and Madanikā. Through such a course, I sounded the depth of your Jñāna by the power of Māyā. Now if you go into Nirvikalpa Samādhi, you will understand all things truly.'

Accordingly the king resolved to merge into the universal Consciousness, and in that Samādhi surveyed all the events that had happened, from the date of his quitting his magnificent country down to the present period of the appearance of Cūḍālā in her real form. After Samādhi, the just king became enraptured with joy and having embraced Cūḍālā, who stood shining, before him as the embodiment of true love and grace was struck dumb for a long time, and completely submerged in bliss. Then having recovered himself, he seated her on his lap and said to her: 'Thou hast, through thy great intelligence, lifted me out of the cave of darkness in which I was entangled. Who is there to compare with thee in all this wide world? How can I, Oh delicate lady, requite thee for thy kindness? Oh thou who hast reached the other side of the ocean of Saṃsāra (mundane existence), and who art the impersonation of justice without any desires, how can I aid thee?'

To which the lady replied: 'Observing you enduring the many acts of Tapas (penance) in the forest, I came with great effort in quest of you to elevate you above Saṃsāra. Hence there is no necessity for you to eulogize me thus, as I did but my duty. Have you not, Oh my husband, freed yourself from petty worldly actions, Saṃkalpa-s (thoughts) and Vikalpa-s (fancies)?'

Then the king said: 'All doubts have now vanished from my mind. I am devoid of desire and the idea of heterogeneity. I have become as immaculate as

Ākāśa. I shall never hereafter fall, through becoming the form of (or thinking about) objects. I have attained the incomparable Samādhi, the highest state worthy of being attained. I am free from mental joy and pain. I shall never hereafter shine as this or that object. I am like the pure light or the resplendent sun, which not coming into contact with any medium such as a wall, etc. is not subject to any increase or diminution. I am like the Ākāśa which permeates all objects, and is yet undefiled. I am of the nature of absolute Consciousness. I can now cognize my Reality to be no other than That. Therefore thou art my Guru. I worship thy lotus feet.'

At which Cūḍālā asked him as to his future course of action. To which the king said: 'I am free from all attachment and hatred. From this day onward, I shall, like a crystal tinged by the five colours, perform my daily duties strictly according to your dictates.'

Then Cūḍālā said: 'If thou art willing to act upon what I say, it behoves thee then to resume the regal duties once relinquished by thee. Let us wield the sceptre of our kingdom for some time as Jīvan-mukta-s and then attain Videha-mukti, after the body is thrown aside.' To this the king acquiesced. Then Cūḍālā rose up and, through her concentrated Saṃkalpa, she acted as follows: She first anointed him by bathing him with the waters of the seven oceans contained in jewelled vessels and then, having installed him on an effulgent throne bedecked with rubies, etc. blessed him with long life. Then the king and his wife Cūḍālā,

who were both of one mind, mounted a decorated elephant and went back to their kingdom with their fourfold army amidst great rejoicing. As soon as they reached the outskirts of the town, the fourfold army there came in advance to meet them. Thus both the armies joined together and proceeded. There the king reigned with true love, along with his wife, for 10,000 years, and then attained liberation, free of the body.

Thus, Oh Rāma, if by associating yourself with the Karman-s of the world, your quiescent Jñāna is developed without longing for objects, you will be able to enjoy true bliss and emancipation. So said Munī Vasiṣṭha of illumined mind and great Tapas to Śrī Rāma.

10. THE STORY OF KACA

Summary—Once again the fact is illustrated that Citta-tyāga alone constitutes total renunciation.

Earlier, I have related to thee the story of Śikhidhvaja, the most enlightened of persons. If thou art as he, thou wilt never be affected by pain. The learned Kaca, the son of Brhaspati, the Devaguru,¹ followed the same path. Thou shouldst be acquainted with his story also.

¹ Brhaspati, Jupiter, is the Guru or priest of the Deva-s.

Rāma asked: Please throw light upon the path by which Kaca came to direct cognition of the Supreme.

Vasiṣṭha replied: Muni Kaca, the son of Br̥haspati, who had knowledge of the substratum of all things through a knowledge of the higher state, approached the Devaguru, his father, for enlightenment regarding the best means of releasing the Self from the care of mundane existence.

The Devaguru said: 'This large expanse of the ocean of birth, wherein live countless hosts of crocodiles, fishes, etc. can be crossed only by the incomparable power of total renunciation, involving great effort and responsibility.' At these words of his father, Kaca, renouncing everything and retiring to the forest, lived there for eight years, at the end of which period, he was visited by his father. Having greeted his father with due respect, he asked him the reason why in spite of a life of renunciation for about eight years, his mind was still sorrowful. To which his father merely replied that he should give up everything. After the departure of his father, he denied himself even the barks of trees he wore. Thus he was stark naked, like a clear sky in the autumnal season, when the sun, moon, stars, etc. are visible. Again Kaca visited his father and having prostrated himself lovingly before him, spoke in plaintive tones of his inability to obtain quiescence of mind, in spite of the complete renunciation of all things. His father gave him the following advice: 'It is the opinion of the great that

the mind is all and that its mastery leads to the renunciation of all. Through such mental renunciation thou wilt be able to free thyself from all pain.' So saying Br̥haspati vanished.

Thereupon the resplendent Muni Kaca said to himself: 'I have been inquiring as to what mind is and have not been able to come to any understanding. If the body with its limbs is different from the mind, then all efforts to separate them are useless; for how can the separation take place between the mind and the body, while they are different from one another?' His doubts about mind not being resolved, he again asked his father to aid him in resolving his doubts.

Br̥haspati said: 'The wise who have understood what mind is say that it is not other than Ahaṃkāra (the idea of "I"). The idea of "I" existing within all creatures is the sinful mind.'

Kaca asked: 'It is indeed difficult to avoid this idea of "I". How is this hard rock to be splintered to pieces?'

Br̥haspati replied: 'Pain does not really exist. It is very easy to remove this Ahaṃkāra. Within the time taken for squeezing a flower or the twinkling of an eye, Ahaṃkāra can be eradicated. No long dissertation is necessary on this topic. One only Principle is, which is the non-dual, the endless, the supreme Jñāna, the immaculate, the Plenum purer than Ākāśa. Meditate upon it without inconstancy of mind and free thyself from sorrow. Being unreal,

Ahaṃkāra will end through effort. How can Ahaṃkāra grow when you meditate on the Eternal? Can dust arise out of the waters, or water out of fire? Contemplating the Eternal, mayest thou be free from the differentiated conceptions of "I", "he", etc. Tattva-jñāna is the non-dual, is not subject to the forms generated by space, time, etc. and is not obscured or sullied by suffering, etc. Mayest thou be in this certitude of Ātmic Reality.'

So Br̥haspati revealed the highest of mysteries. May you be, Oh Rāma, in that self-same desireless state in which Muni Kaca was, who having abandoned the idea of 'I', 'thou,' etc. and destroyed all internal attractions, was engaged in Ātmic meditation, a Jīvan-mukta without any Vikalpa-s in his mind. In Kai-valya (or final liberation), Ahaṃkāra is known to be unreal. Therefore do not set your heart upon giving it up or taking it up. Who will dream of taking hold of or letting go of the horns of a hare which are unreal?

Here Rāma asked: How did there arise in the Plenum of Brahma-jñāna an element foreign to it? Vasiṣṭha replied: The emergence of concepts of diversity, which are unreal, results in rebirth; but the realization of the one Reality without any doubt is freedom from rebirth.

11. THE STORY OF MITHYĀ-PURUṢA, THE ILLUSORY PERSONAGE

Summary—Ahaṁkāra is conceived of in the shape of a Mithyā-puruṣa and illustrated.

May you attain Ātma-jñāna and enjoy supreme bliss after giving up all conception of diversity. Do not afflict thyself, Oh Rāma, like the Mithyā-puruṣa. So said Vasiṣṭha, when Rāghava asked him: How did Mithyā-puruṣa go about with an afflicted heart and without the least benefit to himself? Please explain it to me lucidly.

Vasiṣṭha continued: This story will provoke great laughter and is full of marvellous incidents. In a nook of Cid-ākāśa, where there is not the universe, a certain male personage arose. He was attired in Māyā and replete with Ajñāna. He was base in his tendencies, puerile and of dull head, with the lowest intelligence. He arose like illusory sights appearing in the Ākāśa or water in a mirage. He was but a void out of a void. He went by the name of Mithyā-puruṣa. Unobservant of his own growth and the Cit (consciousness) that manifests itself as if distinct from the universe, he contracted the Saṁkalpa (or thought) of creating the highest Ākāśa without any impediments and so created one. Then in order to set a limit to it, he constructed an enclosed abode. With the idea that the Ākāśa was pent up in that habitation, his desires were bound by and identified with that limited Ākāśa. In course of

time, it became dilapidated and gave way, like a hill worn away by Manvantaric gusts of wind or like rain ceasing at the close of the rainy season.

Then this Mithyā-puruṣa bewailed the disappearance of the Ākāśa in the following manner: 'Oh Ākāśa, in an instant thou hast vanished with the disappearance of my house. Where hast thou gone?' Having finished his lamentations over this Ākāśa house, he created a well and entering into it without any disturbance from without, became fondly attached to the Ākāśa therein. Being disappointed as before in this second effort of his, when the well became quite useless with time and was gradually filled up, he was again afflicted in mind and cried aloud. Then again to preserve the Ākāśa, he created a new pot, and enamoured of its beautiful structure, he gladly entered it and was chained to it by affection. Time, Oh Rāma, set again its hands on this vessel and disposed of it. Finding that all the things he created with belief in their permanency became the victims of time, he dug a pit in the ground and becoming greatly attached to the Ākāśa therein, lived in it, as if it were permanent. Even this was done away with by the elephant of time, like light dispelling darkness. Crying over its loss as usual, he built again a circular abode and dwelt in it with great joy. When the time of destruction arrived, this house and all the other mundane eggs were destroyed, and he drooped like a dry leaf in a stormy wind. The usual lamentation being over, he created a grange for the Ākāśa, which having served

him for a period succumbed to time. Thus did he grieve for a long period over the loss of these many creations of his, namely Ākāśa-house, well-Ākāśa, etc. Now this personage was an ignoramus for he enclosed the Ākāśa within an earthly tenement and having identified himself with the house, etc. fancied he worked and lived and died with it.

Rāma asked: What do you illustrate by this story? What do you mean by enclosing the Ākāśa?

Vasiṣṭha said: The Mithyā-puruṣa is the idea of 'I' (Ahaṃkāra) arising in the void which is like a dark cloud. This Ākāśa in which all the universes exist is self-existent before creation, all-full and endless. In it the idea of 'I' arises like the sense of touch in Vāyu (air); and then this void which is Ahaṃkāra fancies itself as protecting the Cid-ākāśa of Ātman. Then encased in the several bodies symbolized by the well, etc. which he created himself, again and again he subjected himself to pain. With his body, he contracted the thought arising from Bhūtākāśa by which he imprisoned the Cid-ākāśa Ātman. Through it, he rendered himself open to all sufferings. Therefore, Oh lotus-eyed Rāma, do not render yourself liable to pain, like Mithyā-puruṣa who, being imprisoned in the different bodies of house-Ākāśa, etc. identified himself with Bhūtākāśa. The imperishable Śiva who is more all-pervading than Ākāśa, stainless and immaculate, cannot be gauged by the mind and is the natural Ātma-tattva. Can this Ātma-tattva be easily attained by all? The ignorant are despondent, thinking the 'I'

the heart-Ākāśa, perishes when the body perishes. Can the indestructible Ākāśa disappear when the pots, etc. which seem to limit it are destroyed? Ākāśa will never vanish with the disappearance of the pot. So with the destruction of the body, Ātman will never be destroyed. It is only through direct spiritual vision that Brahmic-Reality which is the transcendental Cinmātra and Sat, more subtle than Ākāśa and the atom of atoms, will shine everywhere; but Ahaṃkāra, which is the idea of 'I', is destroyed like a pot. There is really no such thing as birth or death in any place or time. It is only Brahman which manifests itself as the universe through forms. Therefore, having considered all the universes as the supreme Principle without beginning, middle or end, without differences or non-differences, without existence or non-existence, may you be without pain. Should this idea of 'I' be destroyed through the desireless Ātma-jñāna, this idea which is the source of all accidents, non-eternal, dependent, discrimination-less, seed of all sins, of Ajñāna and of birth and destruction, then this very destruction is the Jīvan-mukti state.

12. THE STORY OF BHRŪṄĪŚA

Summary—This story illustrates the fact that the idea of acting, actor, etc. arises through the idea of 'I'.

Such is the true nature of this universe: It manifests itself out of Ātma-jñāna, like the illusion of a serpent arising from a rope. To those who contemplate the rays of the sun as no other than the sun itself, the sun alone exists. This is the much longed-for Nirvikalpa state. But if the sun and its rays are considered as separate, then diversity appears. Having given up all ideas of diversity, may you, Oh Rāma, have that direct spiritual experience wherein the universe is not.

Like the wind agitating the waters, Brahman produces the restless motion of Saṃkalpa. As soon as Saṃkalpa was set afloat, it expanded and differentiated itself into this form-world, when it became the Manas and began to see itself through itself. Therefore, know this universe to be nothing but Saṃkalpa. This universe is neither real nor unreal; it manifests itself like dream creations. Know that the seer, hearer, speaker, feeler, smeller, walker and doer are no new creations, but are the one Truth. All acts of yours are but the stainless Jñāna. As the real nature of Mahat is Brahmic Reality, there is no such thing as the universe. As all things are aspects of Cit, the clouds of universes are no other than Cinmātra. As the one Cit pervades all objects without any illusion, objects do not really exist. Where then is Bandha (bondage) or Mokṣa (liberation)? Having therefore abandoned all the differentiated conceptions of bondage and emancipation, and having observed Mauna (silence) without the least tinge of Ahaṃkāra, may you, Oh Rāma, be engaged in the

performance of actions without Ahaṃkāra, pride, etc. Having cleared your mind of all doubts arising from illusion, and being established in certitude, may you live as the great actor and enjoyer, but yet as the great renouncer of all. At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma queried: What are these three: actorship, enjoyment, and renunciation? To explain this, Vasiṣṭha began: To understand the real significance of these three and thus attain the supreme state without any delusion, Lord Bhṛṅgiśa went to the northern summit of Mahāmeru and having worshipped and praised Parameśvara who was like Cid-ākāśa itself, submitted the following question: 'Moving in worldly delusion and not finding quiescence in Jñāna, I have wandered in ignorance. How can I live with quiescence of mind in this decayed body? Please throw light upon the path of certitude which I can tread without fear?'

Parameśvara deigned to answer as follows: 'If after destroying thy doubts, thou clingest to Truth, thou wilt become the great actor, the great enjoyer, and the great renouncer.'

Bhṛṅgiśa asked: 'What does thou mean by the great (true) actor, the great enjoyer, and the great renouncer?' Parameśvara replied: 'He is the great actor who is indifferent to the fruits of action, free of pleasure and pain, Dharma and Adharma, and performs actions without any desire. He is the great actor who, being silent, is free from ideations of "I" or self-identification with objects, who performs

actions without despondency or fear, and is without desire for objects, thus being merely a witness to all, with an equal vision over all. Know also that this mind is undisturbed, whether in birth or death, appearance or disappearance (of objects).

‘He is the great enjoyer who does not, through anger, long for or reject anything, but enjoys fully those things that come to him. He does not lose his equilibrium of mind even in the enjoyment of illusory pleasures and pain, productive of fear and no bliss; he considers in the same light things leading to dotage or death, regality or adversity; he tastes, with neither joy nor sorrow, delicacies or other things, whether bitter, sour, pungent or saltish. He associates with both the virtuous and the vicious. Such is the true enjoyer.

‘Now listen to the description of the great (true) renouncer. Thou shouldst know that such an intelligent person abandons totally Dharma and Adharma, pleasure and pain, birth and death. He does not have even a touch of desire or doubt. Oh Bhr̥ṅgīśa, the Śruti-s also say that his heart is free from Dharma and Adharma, mental thoughts and actions. He has eradicated from his mind all thoughts of visible things.’

So said Parameśvara to Bhr̥ṅgīśa in days of yore. Having developed through practice this kind of vision, may you, Oh lotus-eyed Rāma, protect your subjects. Brahmic reality alone is that which is ever shining, has neither beginning nor end and is immaculate and non-dual. Nought else is. Thus shall you

contemplate, and being filled with bliss, perform all actions, so that unshakable quiescence of mind may be in you and thereby in all. Destroy Ahaṃkāra entirely with the firm conviction that there is nothing foreign to 'That' and that Sat and Asat will never affect It. You will therefore free yourself of Ahaṃkāra through developing introvision, making the internal harmonize with the external, unaffected by the pain of past actions.

13. THE STORY OF IKṢVĀKU

Summary—In this story, another means of meditation, besides the three modes mentioned in the previous story, is given to know that all is Brahman.

Rāma asked: When the Ahaṃkāric mind is divested of its illusory form and remains in its real state, what is its distinguishing characteristic?

Vasiṣṭha replied: Now listen attentively to the characteristics of a mind which has perished, while its spiritual part survives. No desire, illusions and other stains will unsettle a person who is firmly under the influence of his Ātman, like water on a lotus leaf. The good qualities of benevolence, etc. ever sweetly light his face. He will destroy all sins; the bondage of Vāsanā-s will gradually lose their hold on him. Anger will be slain; the tendency of the mind towards desire will be lost; all the bad impulses of

Kāma (passion) will be dispelled. All illusions will depart. The five organs will not be active in the discharge of their functions. Pain will not afflict him nor pleasure increase. Through internal contentment and freedom from pain, there will arise in him equanimity of mind in all places. Even when pain, etc. affecting his body, exhibit themselves on his face, his mind never writhes under them. When the mind perishes, then even Deva-s will court his friendship with love and he will enjoy great felicity. He will then regard all equally. A perfect harmony and beauty will prevail in him and he will be glorified everywhere. Saṃsāric illusions, Oh gracious Rāma of large eyes, will never affect those painless, wise personages, even though such illusions are productive of great surprises and generate a myriad forms of pleasure and pain. Fie on those low-minded persons of the world who do not long for and attain that Supreme Principle which can be cognized through Jñāna vision only and wherein accidents are unknown.

Now hear of the means through which persons cross this ocean of existence which is bondage, replete with pain, arising through the conjunction of periods of time. The inquiry 'Who am I?' has the potentiality of bringing quiescence of mind which will enable it to cross this ocean of corporeal existence. What is the nature of this universe? Who is the supreme One sought after? Of what avail are material enjoyments? Such a discriminative inquiry is, according to the Veda-s, the best of means. Therefore, thou shalt

hear from me how Ikṣvāku,¹ the foremost and the first king of thy race, managed to attain Jñāna and Mokṣa. While this gracious king was ruling over the earth along the path of the ancients, he held communion within himself thus: 'What is the stainless cause of this world teeming with dotage and death, pleasure and pain, fancies and misconceptions, beyond number?' In spite of his deep contemplation of the same, he was unable to solve the problem.

Therefore, having visited and paid due respects to the Lord, the first Manu² who came down from Satyaloka, he addressed him thus: 'Oh mine of mercy who deigned to descend to this earth from Satyaloka, vouchsafe to enlighten me as regards my real self, the attaining of the eternal and deliverance from pain. Whence is this universe? What is its form? How long does it last? To whom does it owe its origin? At what period and through what cause did it arise? Like a bird flying out of a snare, may I release myself from this universe of different gradations.'

At these words, Manu replied: 'Very wonderful. Thy question arising through thy great discrimination extending over long aeons of time will (when answered) destroy all Māyā. All these paltry universes do not exist, appearing like a Gandharva city or a mirage in a desert. It is only Ātmic Reality that ever is, beyond

¹ He was the first of the solar kings and son of the present Manu Vaivasvata.

² Svāyambhuva Manu.

the reach of the organs, more subtle than Ākāśa, unlimited by space and indestructible. All the visible objects composed of the five elements are reflections in this great mirror of Ātman. Some effulgent Śakti-s (potencies), arising out of Brahman, mingled together and took the form of the mundane egg. Some were of the form of Śiva's hosts. Some assumed the Deva-lokic form. This is the truth about the manifesting Śakti-s. There is no such thing as bondage or Mokṣa. Brahman alone is. It is the eternal Jñāna that shines as the world of variegated objects, like water differentiated into many kinds of waves, foam, etc. Nought else is but the one Brahman.

‘Having dispelled the thoughts of bondage and Mokṣa arising in thee and mastered them, mayest thou be free from fear and as firm as a rock. If thou shouldst associate thyself with thoughts of Saṃkalpa, then the Cinmātra-jñāna will reach the state of a Jīva (in thee), like water transformed into waves, etc. Then the Jīva-s are tossed about in the cycle of rebirths, existing from a remote period. All delusions of pain and pleasure are attributes of the mind and not of Ātman. Like Rāhu¹ which, though not visible at other times, is manifested in conjunction with the moon, Ātman, when it comes into direct experience, will be seen visibly. This Brahman which cannot be cognized through Jñāna-śāstra-s and Ācārya-s can be directly perceived in its own state through oneself and one's

¹ One of the nodes of the moon producing eclipses.

intelligence. Look upon the organs, thy enemy, in the same indifferent manner in which a wayfarer regards objects on his way. It is not proper on thy part to desire or hate the organs, since the body and other objects are the result of Karman, and will inevitably come to be. Therefore, having given them up mentally and made thy mind calm (without feverish thirst), mayest thou be Brahman itself.

‘The identification of “I” with this body produces the bondage of existence. Such an idea is foreign to an aspirant after liberation when he is free from all pain and becomes of the nature of Cinmātra. The impartial intelligence of such a person, which is more subtle than the all-pervading Ākāśa, will destroy existence. Then Ātman, which shines in all objects, will be like the sun’s rays, shining both in clear water and out of it. It will enter the heart of all forms and shine everywhere, like gold appearing in all golden ornaments. It is only its ripened and partless form (or aspect) that manifests itself as this world pervaded by the Ātmic Sattā (Be-ness). Know also Ātman to be like Kumbha-muni Agastya who sipped instantaneously all the waters of the ocean pervaded by the destructive Vāḍava Agni and full of the current of the many rivers of the universes flowing into It.

‘May you be of free will and with great intelligence, having first dispelled, through your intelligence, the countless array of objects such as body, etc. which are non-Ātman and pertain to the world, and be quite humble, through the development of Jñāna. Like

•

a mother who, forgetful of the child that rests on her lap, becomes afflicted at heart and searches everywhere for it, so people, without cognizing the Ātman within, which is without age or death, suffer all sorts of grief, imagining that they have no protector, or that they are destroyed with the destruction of their body nourished by food. Like water which, through agitation in it, generates waves, etc. so also, through the excess of Saṃkalpa, delusions of Cit greatly increase; but should the stains of Saṃkalpa be removed and the Citta be concentrated firmly upon Ātman, thou wilt be able, Oh king, to rule thy realm long without any disquiet, even amidst the tossing waves of the Saṃsāric ocean, being stable in thy Ātman, which is eternal and blissful. Then Ātman which remains after all, will through its Saṃkalpic (or voluntary) potencies, create diverse sports like children in this world. Through its destructive potency, all things will be destroyed and will rest in it. The potency of bondage also will arise of its own accord in this Ātman and merge into that from which it arose. The destructive potency also will arise voluntarily in this Ātman.

‘Like rubies shining with lustre in conjunction with the rays of the sun or the moon, or the fruits, leaves, etc. of a tree, or drops of water in mountain torrents, this illusory world of Buddhi, etc. producing motion, etc. arises out of Brahman. To those who have not cognized Ātman this universe is generative of pain and appears as if it were real. Such is the miraculous working of Māyā. Though Ātman is

ordinarily partless and permeates all parts of the body, yet (through Māyā) it deludes men from cognizing their own Ātman. After contemplating the worlds as the Paramākāśa and freeing thyself from all desire, thou shalt be a Jīvan-mukta of great bliss. After destroying the idea of "I", may you contemplate all objects, with the idea of Abhāva (non-existence), as formless, without attraction, and as Cit and the quiescent. The mere concept that this is good or that is bad is the seed of a succession of pain. Should this seed be burnt up by the fire of equal vision, then where will there be room for the generation of pain? Gently wear the sword of Abhāva (non-existence) in thee.

‘Oh King Ikṣvāku, who art in this fearful forest of Karman-s performed through thy mind, sever all (differentiated thoughts) through Abhāva, attain the supreme state and being filled with discrimination by the abandoning of Karman-s, be established in that state. Only he who, having merged within himself the differences of the universe and having crossed the variety of thoughts, is free from the desire for women and wealth, and from the gloom of Ajñāna generating the idea of "I", and thus has developed true discrimination, will experience Brahmic bliss in himself. He alone will be free from pain. May you ever meditate upon that Jñāna Reality which is quiescent, equal in all and immaculate.’

Again Manu continued: ‘First, Jñāna should be developed through a deep study of Jñāna Śāstra-s and association with the wise. This Śubhecchā (or good

desire) forms the first Bhūmikā (or stage) of Jñāna. It applies to Karma-yogin-s (who do not indulge in rituals alone). Ceaseless Ātma-vicāra (Ātmic inquiry) constitutes the second stage. Asaṅga-bhāvanā is the third. In the fourth stage, Sattvāpatti will destroy to the root all Vāsanā-s. Ānanda-svarūpa (the blissful reality), replete with the non-illusory and immaculate Jñāna, is the fifth stage (of Asaṃsakti). This stage in which there is not the Upādhi (vehicle) of waking or sleeping, is the Jīvan-mukti stage. The sixth stage is like the Suṣupti state of complete bliss, wherein there is nothing but the nature of non-perception. The exalted seventh stage is the aloneness of Mokṣa which is partless, equal in all, immaculate, beneficent, quiescent and the pure Turya. This seventh state, free from all objects and replete with bliss, is stated by some to be the Turyātīta state of Mokṣa which is Cit itself.

‘Of these seven stages, the first three may be included under Jāgrad-avasthā (the waking state). The fourth stage, in which all the universes appear like a dream, falls under Svapna (the dream state). The fifth stage, which is filled with bliss alone, comes under the category of Suṣupti. That which is of the nature of bliss with intelligence is the sixth stage, coming under the head of Turya. Then comes the Turyātīta, the seventh stage, which is above the reach of mind, and speech, self-shining and of the nature of Sat. If through the control of Citta (mind) within the heart, all visible things are destroyed past resurrection, then

there is no doubt that one will become a Jīvan-mukta through the great Be-ness. If without suffering from pleasure or pain, one attains high intelligence and merges into Ātman and enjoys beatitude, then such a being knows Mokṣa. Such a person is a Jīvan-mukta, no matter whether he involves himself in actions or not, whether he is a householder or an ascetic, whether he is conscious of the body or not. Such a person never droops in spirit, since he is convinced that he neither dies nor lives, neither exists nor ceases to exist. Such a person is never afflicted in mind, being without desires or Vāsanā-s or egoism, never clinging to anything. Such a person, being without the three Guṇa-s, birth and death, and being pure and a Jñānin of eternal quiescence and balanced vision, is not in the least afflicted at any time. Such a person, knowing that he is that which pervades all things such as grass, Ākāśa, Sun, Deva-s, Nāga-s and men, never gives way to despondency of heart. Those who have cognized through inquiry that Cit (consciousness) which pervades everywhere in the world, as the warp and the woof, up and down, are the indestructible ones.

‘An object enjoyed through one’s Vāsanā-s brings immediately in its train pleasures; but when it perishes, it will inevitably produce pain. It is indeed a known fact that the majority of mankind does not seek to liberate themselves from pleasure and pain. When Vāsanā-s are either destroyed completely or decay little by little, no joy will be experienced in sensual objects. Pleasure and pain are so inseparably

interblended that they manifest themselves together when they originate, and disappear together when they perish. When the Vāsanā-s of the mind decay, then the Karman-s done by it never generate pleasure or pain. Diverse Karman-s have arisen through the separate appearance of the body and its organs. One who, because of great intelligence, is not attracted by created objects will have a heart calm as the moon, and have the lustre of the rays of the sun. Then by the whirlwind of wisdom, the cotton-pods of Karman-s, Saṃcita and Āgāmin,¹ will be broken and scattered away from the cotton-plant of this body. Like waters in a full river or ocean, Ātman which is non-dual will shine with all its potencies. Know thyself as that essence which merges all the worlds in the non-dual Sat without the host of ceaseless thoughts.'

Again the Muni continued: 'So long as Ātman rests in the desire for sensual enjoyments, so long is it termed Jīva. These material desires arise through Aviveka (non-discrimination). Desires will become extinct with the advent of discrimination. When desires cease, the Jīva's state ends and Ātman attains the state of the flawless Brahman. This (Jīva) Ātman has been going from heaven to hell and *vice versa*. Oh king, do not become the water-pot swinging on the cord of thought tied to the picottah of existence. What sensible man would allow the illusions which confirm the conception that such and such an object is

¹ Āgāmin are the results of the Karman-s done now.

his or that he is the agent? Such deluded persons deserve to go to still lower depths. But those who have eliminated from themselves, through their higher intelligence, the diverse delusions of agency and ownership of objects, or the differentiation into I or others, are able to journey on to Mokṣa, the highest of the high.

‘Having a firm knowledge of Reality, the self-shining Ātman, may you look upon this universe as your form. Only when Jñāna dawns thus in your heart as the non-dual, without any diversities, only then can you free yourself from rebirth and become Para-meśvara (the supreme lord) himself. Know also that I too am on my way to become one with this Jñāna which Brahmā, Viṣṇu, the victorious Rudra and others with their five¹ Kṛtya-s (actions) attain, after merging into the one Tattva. Whatever takes place at stated times and whatever truths are said to occur therein—all these are but the sweet sport of Jñāna. Those who are of pure mind and have conquered time (death), having the attribute of Cinmātra, will have none to compare with them in the fullness of bliss they enjoy.

‘Know that this universe neither exists nor is non-existent; is neither of the nature of Ātman nor non-Ātman. When the Reality is reached, Māyā, existing from endless times, will cease. Mokṣa has neither space nor time in itself; nor is there in it any state,

¹ The five Kṛtya-s are creation, preservation, destruction, disappearance and grace.

external or internal. If the illustory idea of "I" or Ahaṃkāra ceases, then the end of Bhāvanā (thoughts) which is Māyā is Mokṣa. He alone will earn deliverance who is not subject to the agitation arising from the study of Śāstra-s and the eagerness to study all kinds of literature. Such a person ever remains in his indestructible and tranquil Ātman and enjoys bliss. He alone shines as an emperor over all the world, who is indifferent as to what he wears or eats or where he sleeps. Like a lion escaping from its iron cage, free thyself from the castes, orders of life and the Dharma-s of the world, and having lightened thyself of the load of worldly concerns, reach that state which is indestructible and free from rebirth, with an incomparable quiescence of mind, like a clear sky. Then thou wilt be like the deep and crystal waters of a mountain lake. Then thou wilt enjoy within thyself the essence of Brahmic bliss with a steady mind.

‘Such a person is indifferent to the fruits of action. He is without decay. He is proof against the attacks of the Vikalpa-s of actions, virtuous as well as sinful. His mind does not cling to anything. Like a crystal which, though reflecting the five colours, is yet not discoloured by them, so, though in his mind the fruits of actions are reflected, yet he is not tinged by them. Like other men, he worships with true devotion; and though his body is cut asunder through malice, he is unaffected by pleasure or pain, they being mere reflections in his mind. Though engaged in worldly actions such as praise of God and the ceremonial sacrifices, he

conforms to the truth of the Veda-s and is utterly unconnected in his mind with worldly concerns. He is neither the object of fear to those with whom he comes in contact nor is he terrified by any in the world.

‘It is the duty of those who wish to end rebirth to venerate such an exalted personage. Not even Yajña-s or ablutions, Tapas or gifts will confer on one the same effects as those derived from service rendered with true love to those who have glorified themselves in a state of unchangeable Jñāna, free from Samsāric existence.’

Having thus taught him with true love, Brahmā, now passing under the name of Manu, departed to his effulgent mansion in Satyaloka. Oh Rāma, thus did the famous King Ikṣvāku rest in the certitude of Ātman. So said Vasiṣṭha.

14. THE STORY OF A MUNI AND A HUNTER

Summary—This story is meant to illustrate the bliss of Turya.

On being questioned by Rāma as to the wondrous traits of those Jīvan-mukta-s who have worshipped the eternal Brahman through their great wisdom (but without the psychical powers of Aṇiman, etc.), Vasiṣṭha said: The incomparable intelligence of a

Jñānin will ever find wonders and delight in the non-dual Ātman. With stainlessness, fullness and quiescence, the Jīvan-mukta rests in Ātman only. What wonder is there in psychical powers like walking in the skies developed out of Mantra-s, Tapas and other means? Añiman and such other powers accrue only to those persons who expand their minds gradually in this world with intense efforts. But Ātma-jñānin-s do not long for these Siddhi-s. Their minds are characterized by nobility and purity, being free from desire. Without the characteristics of caste and the orders of life and having freedom from the delusion concerning births and deaths, they are enjoyers of partless bliss. Desire, anger, pain, greed, accidents, etc. daily dwindle into nothing, in their case.

Vasiṣṭha continued: Like a noble person who degrades himself into a lowly one, Īśa (the Lord) degrades (i.e. reduces) himself into a Jīva. Myriads of Jīva-s shine beyond number at every creation. Through the flutter of that causal ideation, Jīvic Īśvara-s are generated at every stage of evolution. But the cause is not here (in this world). The Jīva-s that arise from Īśvara and flourish thereby, subject themselves to repeated rebirth through the Karman-s performed by them. This, Oh Rāma, is the relationship of cause and effect. There is no cause for the rise of Jīva-s; but existence and Karman-s are reciprocally the cause of one another. All the Jīva-s arise, without cause, out of the Brahmic state; yet, after their appearance, their Karman-s are the cause of

their pleasure and pain. And Saṃkalpa arising from the delusion which is ignorance of Ātman is the cause of all Karman-s.

As the cause of bondage is Saṃkalpa, you should uproot it from you as completely as possible. The destruction of this primeval cause, Saṃkalpa, is itself Mokṣa. This destruction of Saṃkalpa should be intelligently practised. Where the conception of objects and the enjoyer of objects exists, thou shouldst, my son, gradually and at all times, destroy this Saṃkalpa. Do not identify yourself with objects or the knower. Having destroyed all the Saṃkalpa-s, mayest thou become That which remains. When the five sense-organs are enslaved by objects (along with the mind), the desires engendered constitute bondage; non-attraction towards objects is Mokṣa. If thou art in the least tinged with the desire for objects, then it will involve thee in the meshes of existence. Do not bestow any desire upon the hosts of objects, movable and fixed, from grass up to gold.

Where there is no desire, what is there to feed upon or to perform or abandon? Thou art neither the agent nor the enjoyer. The wise never grieve over things past, or about the future; they perform their present Karman-s well and are masters of them. Pride, illusion and desire are the many binding cords of the mind. Through the discriminative mind, the lower mind is mastered by the wise. Having developed deep discrimination, you destroy the delusions of the lower mind with

the one-pointed Manas (pure mind), like an iron cleaving another iron. The intelligent clean a dirty cloth with dirt (earth) only. A murderous Agnyastra (missile) is counteracted by Varuṇāstra. The venom of a serpent is removed by the antidote, an edible poison.

This Jīva has three forms or aspects. The first two are the base ones, namely the gross and the subtle. The third is the supreme Brahman. Having gained this Brahman, may you free yourself from the first two forms. The gross body was designed for the purpose of enjoyment, with hands and feet, eyes and the rest. The mind which is of the form of Saṃkalpa and produces the conception of Saṃsāra is the subtle mental body. The third aspect is, to all Jīva-s, the Jñāna Reality which is without beginning or end or heterogeneity. Oh Rāma with lotus hands, the immaculate Turya state is beyond this. Being absorbed in this Turya state, may you not identify yourself with the first two forms, but destroy them both altogether.

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāghava asked the Muni: Please describe to me in detail this Turya or Brahmic state which is higher than the three Avasthā-s (Jāgrat, Svapna and Suṣupti). To which Vasiṣṭha, with words shedding bliss, replied: Remaining in the certitude of Ātman, without desire and with balanced vision, having completely eradicated all conceptions of difference, such as 'I' or 'he', existence or non-existence, is Turya. That state of Jīvan-mukti, free from illusions, wherein there is the supreme certainty

of Ātman is the Turya state. Being without Saṃkalpa, it is neither the waking state nor the sleeping state. Nor is it the ordinary Suṣupti state, as there is in Turya the absence of knowledge of enjoyment. All the world becomes then absorbed in the beneficent Ātman. To Jñānin-s, this world is itself Turya (or they can enjoy the Turya state in this); but to the ignorant, the universe is their settled abode (or they pinion their minds to visible things). If after the idea of 'I' vanishes, the mind sees all things equally and performs all actions in such an unattached manner that it cannot be said to perform them, then that is the Turya state.

Though you are the prince of men, full of Jñāna, please listen, Oh intelligent Rāma, to a story that occurred in days of yore. In a spacious forest, a Tapasvin was in a state akin to that of a Maunin.¹ A warlike hunter, who was a veteran in archery, approached this Muni, and addressed him: 'Fleeing my arrows breathing fire, a stag ran towards this place. Will you please tell me where it fled?' To which the Tapasvin replied:—'Oh person of good qualities, we are a band of Tapasvin-s inhabiting this forest. We never involve ourselves in sinful Ahaṃkāra, prompting men to worldly actions. Is it not the mind that associates itself with the actions of the organs? It is long since I am free of the mind of the form of Ahaṃkāra. I now know nothing of the

¹ A person observing a vow of silence.

waking, dreaming, or the dreamless-sleep states. I am now in the Turya state. All the diverse visible things do not exist in the pure Turya state.' The hunter, without understanding the disquisitions of the Muni, left that place.

Therefore, please listen to me attentively. There is no state other than Turya; Jñāna divested of all its diversities is Turya. Nought else is in this world but it. The Jāgrat state is coupled with terrible actions; the dreaming state, with becalmed actions, and the dreamless-sleep state with Ajñāna (ignorant) actions. These are the three states of consciousness for a discriminating mind. If the lower mind perishes, it becomes the Sat and the non-dual and the all-equal state. It is such a certitude of mind that the Jñānin-s develop and attain. In that Turya state in which the Jīvan-mukta-s, the great and transcendent Ṛṣi-s without bondage, abide, may you, my son, ever live firmly without Saṃkalpa-s and Vikalpa-s, free from all pain.

15. THE CONCLUSION OF NIRVĀṆA PRAKARAṆA

Summary—In this chapter a summary is given of all the foregoing fourteen stories leading to Brahman, the Turyātīta state.

Is it not the certain conclusion of all Ātma-jñāna Śāstra-s that the whole world should be seen as a dream only? Neither Avidyā exists nor dire Māyā, generating the pain of actions. Brahman alone is, which is quiescence itself. Diverse religious men, superimposing attributes upon this Brahman, which is the quiescent Cidākāśa abiding in all, the immaculate, the Ātman having endless potencies, dub it with different appellations. Some call it a void; some Parameśvara; and some others Mahā-vijñāna. Therefore having avoided all such, may you rest in the great silence. May you rest ever in the full Jñāna of the immaculate Ātman with true introvision which is Mokṣa, devoid of the painful Manas, Citta, Buddhi, and Ahaṃkāra, and be like a deaf, mute and blind person. Having reached the Jāgrat-suṣupti stage and seen all things within (or having made the mind to contemplate internally), perform actions externally according to your free will. With the growth of the mind, pain increases; with its extinction, there is great bliss. Having mastered your mind, may you free yourself of this world of perceptions, in order that you may be of the nature of Jñāna. Though surrounded by pleasurable or painful objects, may you be immovable as a rock, responding to all things equally. If you wish to free yourself from endless births, do not, Oh Rāma, endeavour to attain pleasure or pain, bliss or non-bliss through your efforts. One whose intelligence is filled with cool ambrosia like the moon, will enjoy bliss. Having understood first the Beness (Principle) of all the worlds

he is in Mokṣa, performing actions though not really performing them.

Here Rāma asked Vasiṣṭha: What are the means by which the seven Jñāna states can be cognized? And what are the characteristics of those Jñānin-s who have cognized them? To which Vasiṣṭha replied: There are two classes of Jīva-s (egos), those that fall under the yoke of material enjoyment and those who do not do so. Now listen to the characteristics of these two. Not caring for Mokṣa, the first class estimates greatly the worldly path and performs actions therein with great certitude of mind. Their tendencies are towards the vast enjoyments of the world. Such a person incarnates in repeated rebirths and then through developing discrimination begins to contemplate thus: 'These rebirths have been utterly fruitless. Enough of worldly delusion. Of what avail are these Karman-s? All my days have been vainly spent in them. If there is a diminution of these Karman-s, then pain will cease.' He who has the indomitable will to find out, will abandon the world and become a Nivṛtta (free personage). Engaged in ceaseless inquiry, overcoming all illusions and contriving means to cross this Samsāra, such a person will, every moment of his life, be engaged in the renunciation of all his desires.

Ever bent upon the higher spiritual pursuits, such a person daily revels in the bliss of his own Self. He is loth to participate in frivolous and stainful Karman-s. He performs virtuous actions and never discloses them to others. He is engaged in those Karman-s only

which do not bring fear in the hearts of the worldly. He shrinks from sinful ones. Never will he long for enjoyments. He utters only appropriate words, in the proper time and place, with great love, due respect, much endearment and prodigious intelligence. Such a personage will have reached the first stage of Jñāna, i.e. Śubhecchā. Moreover, with his three organs (of mind, speech, and body) he longs to associate with the transcendently wise. Being an ardent seeker after knowledge, he studies spiritual books. Such a person, who enters upon this line of inquiry after resolving within himself upon the destruction of Saṃsāra, is indeed a knower of the first stage (or has reached the highest ladder of the first stage).

The second stage is called Vicāraṇā, and is free from ignorance. In order to know about the Dharma-s (virtuous actions), the proper path, Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and good actions, he who is at this stage will associate with only the wisest, who have great love and can throw light upon the real significance of the holy Vedic sentences. He will, after discriminating between the real and the unreal, know what actions ought to be done and what not, like the master of a house acquainting himself perfectly with his domestic affairs. Pride, envy, Ahaṃkāra, desires, delusion, etc. arising through Avidyā (ignorance) will be easily disposed of by him, like a serpent throwing off its slough. Such an intelligent person can realize truly the esoteric and mysterious significance of Jñāna-śāstra-s and of the words of an Ācārya or a wise personage.

Then the third stage, quite free from attractions, will be reached by him, where he will rest as on a soft cushion of tender, new flowers. After mastering all the observances inculcated by the Śāstra-s, he will spend his life in listening to Tattva-Jñāna stories in the abode of noble Tapasvin-s and others. Broad slabs of stone will be his abode and resting place. Having control of mind and free from attraction towards objects, he will live a nomadic life in the forest with an equal vision over all. Through a study of Jñāna-śāstra-s and the performance of good Karman-s, a true cognition of Reality will arise.

Those who have reached the third stage can be divided into two categories, namely the ordinary and the special. Again, Oh Rāma, born of the race of Manu, each of these has its two subdivisions. The ordinary indifference is non-association with objects taking such forms as I am neither the actor nor the enjoyer, neither the disciple nor the Ācārya. All pleasure and pain arise through the law of Īśvara only, who is pleased to bless us all. How can agency be attributed to me? Excessive enjoyments are fatal diseases. Our wealth is a source of infinite danger. Death is only for birth (again). The staggering pains of keen intelligence are but maladies and obstacles to progress. Yama (Death) will again and again endeavour to destroy the many universes. Therefore objects will not trouble their hearts with desire. Those who are thus absorbed in trying to know the underlying significance of the sacred sentences are of the ordinary class in the third stage.

Through the path of non-desire, association with the wise, by illumination within oneself of the Self-Caitanya, and one's supreme efforts and ceaseless study of Jñāna-śāstra-s, the great shore beyond the vast waters of rebirth, Oh Rāma, wearing garlands of gems and honey-dropping flowers, can be directly seen like a fruit in the palm of the hand. Oh thou who art like a cloud showering grace, the special (or second) indifference arises when one is in the certitude of silence, dispelling all Saṃkalpa-s knowing that one is not the actor, agency being attributable to Īśvara or one's own destiny. It also arises when there is no differentiation of thought into worldly objects or otherwise, Cit or non-Cit, internal or external, high or low, and everything merges into the quiescent state, free from thought, rebirth, beginning and end. This third stage will bring in its train the matchless lotus bud of Jñāna which blossoms through the sun of Viveka (discrimination) arising in the heart, and which is at the head of the stalk which is the clear mind, arising from the mud of Vāsanā-s.

The first stage of Śubhecchā arises in the mind, as in the analogy of a crow and the palmyra fruit, through association with the wise and the performance of virtuous actions without any desire for fruit. This will irrigate the mind with the waters of discrimination and protect it. This stage will be developed with non-attraction (or indifference). With the development of this indifference every day through effort, it will be found that the first stage is the substratum of the other

stages like labourers cultivating lands for others' sustenance. From it, the next two stages Vicāraṇā and Tanumānasī will be reached. With the cultivation of special indifference, the third stage is reached. A person who has reached this stage will be free of all Saṃkalpa-s.

Here Rāma remarked: How can liberation be obtained by those who are of degraded family, without intelligence, performing bondage-giving Karman-s, of vicious tendencies and without Jñāna? Moreover if a person dies, having reached the first, second or third stage, what will be his future fate? Please enlighten me on these points, Oh Lord.

To which the wise Vasiṣṭha replied: The ignorant, who are subject to many frailities, will have rebirths of diverse kinds. These rebirths will not cease till the first Jñāna stage is reached. If the virtuous path be trodden, there arises indifference; with association with the wise also, this indifference will arise; and when there is indifference, the Jñāna stage will surely be reached. Through it, rebirth will cease. All the Śāstra-s point to this goal only. Again, hear of the fate of those who, being in one or other of these Jñāna states, breathe their last. Should one satisfy the qualifications required of him in the three Jñāna stages, then all his former Karman-s will cease to exist. Then Deva-s will conduct him on their divine vehicles to Devaloka and other places, where he will feast his eyes upon the pleasant scenery of Meru, divine gardens, caves and beautiful damsels. After this enjoyment,

the old twofold Karman-s will perish completely, and then such persons redescend upon earth as Jñānin-s. They will incarnate in a family of the wise, with enormous wealth, good qualities and purity of mind and body and unerringly follow the path of Jñāna, since they have already subjected themselves to a rigid course of discipline.

As this universe is seen as in the waking state by a Jñānin in these three stages, they can well be termed as of the waking state. Persons in these three stages are considered as Ācārya-s in the work-a-day world. To the ignorant, they appear like those who have attained Mokṣa and are extolled. They instil wisdom in the ignorant. They do only things fit to be done, and refrain from doing things which ought not to be done. They act consistently with the working of nature. Such men alone are great men.

In the first stage of matchless Jñāna, the nature or qualities of an Ācārya will germinate; in the second stage they will bloom; and in the third stage, they will fructify. Should a Jñānin die while in this last stage, he will remain in Svargā for a long time, and then reincarnate on earth again as a Jñānin. When Ajñāna (ignorance of truth) ends after these three stages, Jñāna will dawn fully in his mind and settle itself firmly there, all-pervading and without beginning and end. It is with this mind associated with Jñāna that Yogin-s shine.

Those who have reached the fourth stage will look steadfastly and calmly upon all things in the

universe with an equal eye, as if it were a dream. Oh Rāma, all the above three stages can be classified under the Jāgrat state, while the fourth can be included under the Svapna state. In this last stage, the mind will vanish like clouds in the autumnal season. Then it will remain in the transcendent Sat-bhāva which survives all. With the destruction of the mind, Vikalpa-s will not arise.

Then passing over to the fifth stage which will come under Suṣupti, he will remain in the absolute certitude of non-duality, when all the particularities of Guṇa-s will disappear. Such a person will have full Jñāna and be free from the gloom of duality. He will remain in the Suṣupti state, and rejoice in the possession of matchless introvision. Though engaged in external actions, he will ever be tranquil. The sixth stage being reached, the Turya state ensues, when he will be engaged in the practices appurtenant to that stage, being completely divested of all Vāsanā-s. Then he spends his time as the Kevalin, free from all ideas of difference or non-difference, 'I' or 'not-I', being or non-being. A Jīva in this state, unaffected by Ahaṃkāra, having neither the idea of attaining Nirvāṇa nor of being without it, will be like the steady and unflickering light of a lamp. Worldly creation, having then nothing external or internal, shines all-full both inside and outside through Brahmic vision, as a pot filled to the brim would be in the midst of the ocean full of water. This personage, though seeming to have everything has really nothing. Having solitarily passed

this sixth stage, the Jīvan-mukta reaches the seventh stage alone. It is in this seventh stage that disembodied liberation is attained. Thus is the final state of the supreme Jñāna stages reached, which is beyond all description.

With regard to this seventh stage of Videha-mukti, different names have been ascribed. Some say it is Paramaśiva; some hold it to be a Void; some hold it to be Vijñāna; some say it is Kāla (time); and some Prakṛti. Others there are who find it impossible to cognize and describe this disembodied (or formless) state which, being homogeneous, is beyond the ken of speech. If these seven Jñāna stages are crossed, pain will not touch a person.

There is a mad, rutting elephant with great tusks, showering water as it goes, which stalks the world with its writhing trunk, spotted with white. If this animal which generates never-ceasing pain be slain, then mankind will cross with you all the various stages of the above-mentioned Jñāna. So long as this mighty elephant spraying water be not slain through one's might, who can become a great warrior in the field of battle which is this universe replete with pain?

At these words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma said: What is this powerful elephant you speak of? Where is the field of battle? How can the animal be annihilated? What is its residence?

To which Vasiṣṭha replied: This wild elephant showering water is no other than pain-generating desire which ever tries to appropriate to 'I' all the

things of the universe and enjoys itself with great mirth and joy in the spacious forest of the body. It has as its young ones, the Indriya-s, full of anger and greed. It acts by being merged into the forest of the mind. The terrible twin Karman-s (good and bad) are its two tusks. The Vāsanā-s are the waters shed by it. It ranges everywhere and at all times. All the visible objects of Saṃsāra are the battlefield in which the carnage takes place. This elephant, desire, which again and again becomes victor over persons, puts an end to the myriads of poor Jīva-s. All the Vāsanā-s with their modifications, existence, Manas, Buddhī, Saṃkalpa and the rest pertain to Antaḥkaraṇa, the lower mind only. It is most conducive to the progress of a Jñānin to conquer fearlessly by all means and as if in sport this elephant of desire through might and the arrows of bravery. If through imbecility, thy mind longs after the things of the world, please hear from me the means of arresting it. So long as these desires exist in thee, the poisonous disease of Saṃsāra will creep upon thee. The mind which expands itself everywhere, thus enmeshing itself in bondage, can be called the despicable Saṃsāra itself. Its destruction alone is Mokṣa. Such is the truth.

If a disciple's mind is cleansed of all its illusions, and he is initiated into the sacred mysteries by a Guru, then he will obtain quiescence as when a drop of oil poured over water. Through the illumination of Jñāna, this mind which was originally of the form of the seed of desire is free of rebirth; and there

arises in it no worldly desires, because of its *Asaṃvedana* (non-receptivity). If desires, which bring in their train manifold mischief, arise at any time in you, you should destroy them at once through *Asaṃvedana*. Even though a host of desires manifest themselves in you in diverse ways, yet the *Vāsanā*-s which are inseparably associated with the body will never fail to be removed by *Asaṃvedana*. Do not fall in love with your desires but regard them in the light of a carcase to be loathed. When the mind, through powerful *Pratyāhāra*¹ does not hanker after desire, which should be thought of as nothing but *Vāsanā*-s, it remains still. This effort is called *Asaṃvedana*.

The wise say that the idea of 'mine' and 'thine' is only the foul creation of the mind. If all objects vanish through *Jñāna*, the wise, Oh stainless Prince, say that all illusions will disappear. The existence of *Manas* is *Samkalpa*; but its non-existence is itself *Śiva* (auspiciousness or bliss). The contemplation of feeling and non-feeling after crossing all objects is the true contemplation. May you, after abandoning all ideas of intelligence and non-intelligence, and becoming oblivious of all things, remain steadfastly and firmly with great *Jñāna* in an unchanged state.

Now addressing the assembly, *Vasiṣṭha* said: In order that all persons in this hall may without exception understand what we say, we shall now proclaim to all: It is only *Samkalpa* destroyed beyond resurrection that

¹ One of the eight parts of *Yoga* restraining the organs.

constitutes the immaculate Brahmic state. Why should not men then contemplate silently and secretly in their hearts the destruction of this Saṃkalpa? Then it will so happen that even the throne of an emperor, whose sceptre sways the whole earth, will be regarded by them as a paltry bauble. This Brahmic state is obtained only by those who observe Mauna (silence in regard to material pleasures). Like a person who journeys to a great city in a reverie, unconscious of the pain which his feet undergo in the exertion of walking, an Ātma-jñānin performs all Karman-s, without being conscious of performing them. There is no use in dilating further on this subject. Now hear from me, in brief, the substance of what I said before. Saṃkalpa is Saṃsāra; its destruction is Mokṣa. Then turning to Rāma he said: Mayest thou be in a state of bliss, perceiving all worlds to be of the nature of Jñāna, which is quiescence without parts or end or destruction or fluctuation. That which is described as the imperishable state of quiescent Jñāna is Asaṃvedana. Perform all thy allotted tasks being at the same time in the Jñāna state and without the attraction of desire. That Jñāna which tends to the destruction of the mind—a great task truly—is Asaṃvedana. Mayest thou be, by treading this path, in that state of beatitude which is the quiescent Jñāna. Identification of things with one's self will not free one from pain. Asaṃvedana alone will confer Mokṣa. Whatever is dear to thee (or proper in thy eyes), that thou shalt perform. The self-light of Śiva (the auspicious) is the all-pervading Sat. It alone

is the quiescent, auspicious and perfect bliss, shorn of all objects. It alone is Jñāna and Sat. It is this sure, direct cognition of non-duality that constitutes, Oh Rāma, Karma-tyāga or the renunciation of all actions.

Thus did Vasiṣṭha initiate Śrī Rāma into Ātman, which was again repeated by Muni Vālmīki for the benefit of Bharadvāja.

OM TAT SAT

INDEX

- Ācārya, and the Spiritual Path 384-438
 Action *see* Karman
 Adepts, not affected by Māyā 182
 Ahaṃkāra, seed of mind 415-16
 Ahaṃkāra, cause of 15, 363, 417
 Ahaṃkāra, delusion of 167-8, 440-1, 444-5
 Ahaṃkāra, nature, kinds 167-70
 Ahaṃkāra Non-, success of 164-70
 Ahaṃkāric Vāsanā-s, destruction 213-14
 Ajñāna, seven stages of 135-6
 Ākāśa, kinds of 68, 172
 Anāhata Śabda 242
 Antaḥkaraṇa 64, 242, 358
 Arjuna, who is 365
 Asaṃvedana 478-9
 Ātma-jñāna, attainment of 49, 126, 135-6, 153, 175-6, 209-10, 215, 284, 367, 398, 437
 Ātma-vicāraṇa 45, 47, 49, 205, 239-40, 275-85
 Ātma-vicāraṇa, persons without 14-16
 Ātman, nature of 61
 Ātman, Non-, contemplation of 154-64
 Ātman, omnipresence of 36, 52-4
 Ātman, what is 130-2
 Ātmic Saṃkalpa 170-95
 Attraction, what is, kinds of 290-1
 Avatāra *see* Viṣṇu, incarnation of
 Avidyā, extinction 129, 358
 Bhūta-s, destruction of 261
 Birth and death, illusory character of 190-3
 Births and deaths, cycle of 42-3, 179, 222
 Births, previous 78, 302, 335, 369-70
 Bliss, attainment of 357-60
 Bliss, experience of 293
 Bliss, supreme 2, 45-6
 Bliss, what is 358
 Body, eightfold 180
 Bondage, what is 211, 290
 Brahman, different appellations of 117
 Brahman, diverse forms 177-9
 Brahman, nature of 60-1, 98-100, 115, 298, 326-7, 360-3, 376-7, 380, 418-19, 452-3
 Brahman, realization 101
 Brahmarandhra 245

- Brahmic state 41, 182-3, 282, 327, 357-60, 477
 Caitanya and Māyā 89
 Caitanya, what is 52, 355
 Caitanyaśakti 245
 Certitude, four kinds of 215
 Cidākāśa 42, 58, 68-71, 76, 87
 Cidātman 341
 Cintāmaṇi 83
 Ciraṃjīvin-s 328
 see also Death, overcoming of
 Cit in the heart 361-2
 Cit, nature of 196-200
 Citta, aspect of Antaḥkaraṇa 64
 Consciousness, non-dual absolute 130, 273, 355
 Contentment *see* Saṃtoṣa
 Death 23-5, 81, 84
 see also Yama
 Death, overcoming of 337-8
 Dejection, the Great 10
 Delusion 11-30, 211
 Desire, affliction by 17-19
 Desire-freed mind 49
 Deva-pūjā *see* Worship
 Dhyāna, what is 277
 Dhyeya-tyāga 214, 223
 Diseases, origin and cure of 393-5
 Dotage 22-3
 Emancipation, longing after
 see Mumukṣutva
 Garuḍa-mantra 45
 God, what is 347
 Grace of Īśvara 233
 Guṇa-s, three 324
 Guru, need for 384, 398-9, 405, 407, 421
 'I', idea of, severing of 213, 381, 460
 'I', identification of, with body 197, 202, 386-7
 'I', origin of 150, 281-2, 417
 see also Prakaraṇa III
 'I', rooted in the mind 162, 265, 445-9
 'I', true significance of 166
 'I', who am 239-43, 281-2
 Infancy, weaknesses of 19
 Jāgrat 135-6, 456
 Jāgrat-suṣupti 293-4, 467
 Jāgrat-svapna 135
 Jīva and Citta 90
 Jīva, experiences of 90, 177-8, 464
 Jīva, three aspects of 464
 Jīva, two classes of 468
 Jīva, what is 54, 179-81, 363, 458
 Jīvākāśa 71-3, 190
 Jīvan-mukta, becoming a 198
 Jīvan-mukta, characteristics of 36, 38, 49-50, 62, 94, 138, 198-9, 214-16, 248, 290, 292-6, 309, 314, 457, 460

- Jivan-mukti, state of realization 75-6, 217, 246, 291-2, 303
- Jñāna, absolute 98-9
- Jñāna and Ajñāna 134
- Jñāna and Yoga 296, 298, 328
- Jñāna, defined 380-1
- Jñāna, development of 51, 201, 231-2, 259-60, 420
- Jñāna, illumination of 155-9
- Jñāna, seed of 314-15
- Jñāna, seven states of 136-8, 467-74
- Jñānākāśa 37, 64
- Jñāna-śakti 176
- Jñānātman, creative power of 55
- Jñānātman, state of 143
- Jñeya-tyāga 214
- Kaivalya 309
- Kāla (Time) 23-5, 56-8, 152, 305, 475
- Karman, Āgāmi 458 n.
- Karman, Niṣkāma 223
- Karman, Prārabdha 3
- Karman, Saṃcita 38, 57
- Karman, true 379
- Karman-s 57, 393, 406, 458, 462-3
- Karman-s, without fruit 365-7
- Kṛṣṇa, who is 365
- Kuṇḍalinī Śakti 392-3, 396-7
- Kūṭastha 53
- Laya state 146
- Liberation *see* Mokṣa
- Life (Prāṇa), delusion 13-14
- Loka-s 106, 237
- Lust 21-2
- Mahātman-s, experience of 287
- Manas and Saṃkalpa 55, 59, 65-89, 104, 109-10
- Manas and Vṛttijñāna 54
- Manas, fluctuation of 16, 125, 163, 263-4, 358-9
- Mantra, Om Namō Nārāyaṇāya 234
- Mantra, Viṣucikā (cholera) 92-3
- Mauna state 199
- Mauna, what is, and kinds of 373
- Maunin, true 421n., 478
- Māyā and Mokṣa 459-60
- Māyā, bonds of 182
- Māyā, delusion of 35-7, 65-89, 127, 131-2, 139-43, 207, 248-58
- Māyā, pure and impure 354
- Māyā, substratum of 259
- Meditation 258-75, 354-5, 449-61; *see also* Dhyāna
- Meditation, seven stages 455-6
- Mind and body 108
- Mind and Tattva-jñāna 317
- Mind as consciousness and universe 109-14
- Mind, control of 17, 108-14, 125-9, 157, 286-7, 289-306, 317-19, 338, 358, 434-5

- Mind, creator of pleasure and pain 132-3
- Mind, despondency of 30
- Mind, destruction of 60
- Mind, divested of desires 49, 155, 183, 224, 449-50
- Mind, impure 27
- Mind is Saṃkalpa 208
- Mind, lower, aspects of 387 n.
- Mind, nature of 415-16
- Mind, quiescence, state of 33 ff., 42
- Mind, seed of Māyā 308
- Mind, spiritual 449-50
- Moha *see* Delusion
- Mokṣa, attainment of 1, 200-1, 225-8, 294, 340, 375
- Mokṣa, four means to 43-51
- Mokṣa, what is 225, 227-9, 294, 325
- Mumukṣutva (longing after emancipation) 40-52
- Muni-s, two kinds of 373
- Nirvāṇa, attainment of 2
- Nirvāṇic Bliss, what is 45-6, 52
- Nirvikalpa Samādhi 233, 243, 270, 272
- Pain, cause and end of 29-34, 108, 197, 285-9
- Parabrahman 164, 305, 418-19
- Paramākāśa 82
- Paramārtha state 293
- Path, qualifications—Mumukṣutva 40, 46-8
- Path, qualifications—Renunciation 384 ff.
- Plants, intelligence in 325
- Prakṛti, what is 324
- Pralaya state (Dissolution) 27-8
- Prāṇa, characteristics of 339-40
- Prāṇa, control of 268-9, 289-307, 311, 318, 328, 388-442
- Prāṇa, delusion of 13-14, 310
- Prāṇava (Om) 267-9, 279, 346 n.
- Prāṇavāyu arrested 274
- Prāṇāyāma *see* Prāṇa, control of
- Principle, all-pervading 305
- Psychic powers 391-3, 397, 462
- Pūjā *see* Worship
- Puruṣa 305
- Puryaṣṭaka body 355, 362-3, 392, 396
- Rākṣasa-s, destruction of 7
- Renunciation, total 438-49
- Renunciation, wrong conception of 411-14
- Rudra-s, what are 371 n.
- Sādhu-saṅga 48-9
- Śakti, destructive 25-6
- Śakti-s 176, 330-2, 349
- Salvation, fourfold means of 2
- Samādhi 76-8, 258-77, 284, 301, 424
- Saṃkalpa, defined 194

- Saṃkalpa-s 114, 117, 177, 181,
 344, 371-2, 454, 477-8
 Saṃnyāsa 366
 see also Renunciation
 Samsāric life 208, 313
 Saṃtoṣa 47-8
 Saṅga, what is, and giving up
 321, 365-6, 378-83
 Śānti 46-7
 Sattā-mātra 314-15
 Sattā-sāmānya 273, 316, 325
 Sattā-s, three 315
 Shrines, sacred, pilgrimage to 4
 Siddha-s, appearance of 32
 Silence *see* Mauna
 Śiva 305
 Sorrow *see* pain
 Spiritual experience 211-22
 Spiritual stages, seven 456,
 468-74
 Śubhecchā 468
 Suṣumnā 396
 Suṣupti 136, 145, 326
 Suṣupti-mauna 374-5
 Svapna 136
 Svapna-jāgrat 136

 Tanmātra-s, five 180
 Tattva-jñāna 54, 138-9, 298-9,
 317
 Time *see also* Kāla
 Time, mode of the mind 117-
 24
 Turya state 50-1, 137-8, 294,
 461, 464-6
 Turyātita state 138, 273, 293,
 322-8, 456, 466-78

 Universe, creation of 52, 54,
 55, 183
 Universe, disappearance of 54
 Universe, illusory nature of 82,
 202-321, 459
 Universe is mind 103-6, 124,
 145-6
 Universe, mind creating 59
 Universe, origin of 52-60
 Universe, quiescence of 306-21
 Universal Beness *see* Sattāsā-
 mānya

 Vandhya and Avandhya attrac-
 tions 291
 Vāsanā-s, Ahaṃkāric, destruc-
 tion of 213-14
 Vāsanā-s and desires, devoid of
 160, 212, 266, 317, 406
 Vāsanā-s, pure and impure 3,
 40-2, 198, 310, 316
 Vasiṣṭha, life and initiation of
 42-4
 Vāyu-s 339
 Vicāraṇā 468
 Videha-mukta 63-5, 214, 295,
 309
 Vijñāna 305
 Viṣṇu, incarnation of 364
 Viveka 10, 411
 Void 305, 467, 475
 Vṛtti- (or mental) Jñāna 54

- Walker of the skies 391, 396
 Wealth, delusion of 13
 Wise, association with 27-8
 Women, desire for 21
 Worship, external 347-51
 Worship, internal 351-6
 Worship, rationale of 343

 Yajña 15, 133
 Yama 363-4
 see also Death
 Yama, administers Laws of
 Īśvara 149-50, 152

 Yama and Niyama 262
 Yama will not approach 337
 Yoga and Jñāna 296-7, 298,
 328
 Yoga, Haṭha, generates pain
 268
 Yoga, practice of 391-2
 Yoga sleep 64
 Yoga, two means of 328
 Yogin, who is a 293
 Youth, pleasures of 20
 Yuga-s, four 148
 Yuga-s perish 364